United Nations

A/72/94

General Assembly

Distr.: General
26 July 2017
English
Original: Arabic/English/French/
Russian/Spanish

Seventy-second session
Item 42 of the provisional agenda*
Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba

Report of the Secretary-General

Summary

In its resolution 71/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-second session.

The present report reproduces the replies of Governments and bodies of the United Nations system to the request of the Secretary-General for information on the matter.

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I. Introduction

1. In its resolution 71/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", the General Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the Assembly at its seventy-second session.

2. Pursuant to that request, in a note verbale dated 1 April 2017, the Secretary-General invited Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system to provide any information they might wish to contribute for the preparation of the report. A further note verbale was sent on 1 June 2017.

3. The present report reproduces the replies from Governments and organs and agencies of the United Nations system that had been received as at [...] June 2017. Replies received after that date will be reproduced as addenda to the present report.

II. Replies received from Governments

Afghanistan

[Original: English]
[19 June 2017]

The Government of Afghanistan has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

In that regard, the Government of Afghanistan voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution, as well as other resolutions on this matter, and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter.

Albania

[Original: English]
[1 June 2017]

The Republic of Albania, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 71/5 and does not have or apply any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the above-mentioned resolution.

Algeria

[Original: Arabic]
[4 May 2017]

Algeria reaffirms its deep concern over the continuing effects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo that the United States of America has imposed on Cuba for over half a century. That embargo continues to be a basic obstacle to economic and social progress.

On 26 October 2016, the General Assembly adopted by consensus its resolution 71/5 on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, thus reaffirming the consensus of the international community regarding the justness of that cause. Algeria regards the embargo imposed on Cuba as a violation of the principles of the international law, in particular those related to the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of international trade and navigation.

In addition to contravening the provisions and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the enactment by certain States of laws and regulations intended to have extraterritorial effect infringes on the sovereignty of other States and impedes the economic and human development of the world's peoples. Algeria, which rejects all such illegal unilateral coercive measures, has been unwavering in its call for an end to this unjust embargo that has been imposed against Cuba.

In that connection, Algeria recalls the principled position adopted by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries at the seventeenth Ministerial Conference of its member States, held in Algiers in May 2014, and the position adopted at the seventeenth Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, held in Venezuela in September 2016, calling for an unconditional end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

Algeria expresses its satisfaction at the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America in July 2015 and the constructive steps to facilitate the movement of persons between the two countries that were taken following the official visit of former United States President Obama to Havana in March 2016. Algeria regards those positive developments as an opportunity and a catalyst for the normalization of relations between the two countries in all areas. Algeria stresses that relations between the two countries cannot be fully normalized in practice unless the embargo imposed against the Cuban people is ended definitively.

Andorra

[Original: English]
[3 April 2017]

The Government of the Principality of Andorra has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5. In that regard, the Government of the Principality of Andorra has always voted in favour of resolutions on the matter and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Angola

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Republic of Angola reiterates the importance of ending the economic and financial blockade imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Republic of Angola takes good note of the normalization and positive signal given by the bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States. The visit last year by former President Barack Obama to Cuba, the first United States Presidential visit to Cuba in 88 years, should continue to encourage the American authorities to take concrete measures in order to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba, thus creating in the hemisphere a climate of political and economic progress.

The Republic of Angola encourages the United States to build a relationship of dialogue and cooperation with Cuba based on mutual respect.

The Republic of Angola reaffirms its commitment to respect, preserve and promote the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the provisions of international law, as they constitute the essence of multilateralism and a collective effort to maintain peace and international security, economic growth and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In this context, the Republic of Angola reiterates its concern over the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba and expresses its desire to see the current negotiations under way evolve towards a final resolution that will bring the Cuban and American peoples closer.

The Republic of Angola reiterates its unconditional support for the implementation of the recommendations contained in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of resolution 71/5, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba by the United States of America, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016, and takes this opportunity to appeal once again to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote constructive and transparent dialogue between the two countries, with a view to achieving the objectives of all the resolutions already adopted by the United Nations on the matter.

Antigua and Barbuda

[Original: English]
[16 May 2017]

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, and in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government of Antigua and Barbuda expresses its concern at the continued promulgation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, despite the overwhelming support by Member States for General Assembly resolution 71/5, previous resolutions against the embargo and relevant international treaties.

Further, in accordance with paragraph 2 of resolution 71/5, the Government of Antigua and Barbuda continues to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

Argentina

[Original: Spanish]
[22 May 2017]

The Government of the Argentine Republic has fully implemented the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and previous Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

The Argentine position on this issue is regulated by Act No. 24.871, enacted on 5 September 1997, which established the legislative framework governing the scope of application of foreign legislation within Argentina. Article 1 of that Act provides that foreign legislation which, by imposing an economic embargo or restricting investment in a given country, purports to have extraterritorial legal effects in order to bring about a change of government in a country or to affect its right to self-determination shall be absolutely inapplicable and devoid of legal effects. The United States embargo against Cuba is regulated by federal legislation, in particular the Torricelli Act (Cuban Democracy Act) of October 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act) of March 1996.

In addition, Argentina is fully committed to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism. Within that framework, since 1995, Argentina has supported the General Assembly resolutions concerning the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. It has also voiced opposition to the embargo at every available opportunity, both in regional forums and in other international organizations.

The Argentine Government optimistically welcomes the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and urges both Governments to strengthen their dialogue, which will enable all outstanding issues, including the lifting of the embargo, to be resolved.

In keeping with this position, Argentina has supported the following declarations in multilateral forums:

(a) Group of 77 and China

- The Ministerial Declaration adopted at the fortieth annual meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77, which took place in New York on 23 September 2016. In paragraph 152, the Ministers reaffirmed their call upon the Government of the United States to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, while recognizing the actions taken by the executive power to modify certain aspects of the embargo.

(b) Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC)

- Special declaration on the need to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, adopted at the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government on 25 January 2017, in Punto Cana (Dominican Republic).
- Political Declaration of Punta Cana, adopted at the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government on 25 January 2017, in Punto Cana (Dominican Republic). In paragraph 8, CELAC reiterates its deepest rejection of the application of unilateral coercive measures and, in paragraph 10, reaffirms its call upon the Government of the United States to unconditionally end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba for over five decades.

(c) Ibero-American Summit

- Special communiqué on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States of America against Cuba, including the implementation of the Helms-Burton Act. The Special communiqué was adopted at the twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Cartagena de Indias (Colombia), on 28 and 29 October 2016.

Armenia

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

Armenia national legislation does not promulgate or apply any laws or regulations, referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5, that could have a devastating influence on the economic and social development of Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Armenia has on a number of occasions expressed its position against the policy of economic blockades and closed borders, being itself subject to a continuing blockade by Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Australia

[Original: English]
[3 May 2017]

The Government of Australia reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5. Since 1996, the Government of Australia has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba. Australia has no sanctions or measures against Cuba that restrict trade or investment. Australia is encouraged by the ongoing steps to normalize relations between Cuba and the United States. We trust the progress made in the past two years will be maintained.

Azerbaijan

[Original: English]
[26 April 2017]

The Republic of Azerbaijan firmly upholds the norms and principles of international law in its foreign policy. The Republic of Azerbaijan enjoys friendly diplomatic, economic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba. Azerbaijan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would limit economic, trade or financial relations between Azerbaijan and Cuba. Azerbaijan will continue to take appropriate measures to strengthen cooperation and develop friendly relations with Cuba. The Republic of Azerbaijan also welcomes the ongoing efforts of the United States of America and Cuba towards normalizing relations between the two countries.

Bahamas

[Original: English]
[1 June 2017]

The Commonwealth of the Bahamas enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

The Bahamas has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Commonwealth of the Bahamas and the Republic of Cuba.

In this context, the Bahamas recalls and affirms the position of regional and interregional bodies, such as the Caribbean Community, the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, and the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Bahamas also lauds the ongoing rapprochement between the Governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba and welcomes the efforts of the Executive Branch of the United States Government towards having the Legislative Branch of that Government repeal the legislation enforcing the embargo.

Bahrain

[Original: Arabic]
[19 May 2017]

The Kingdom of Bahrain has consistently supported the General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, and reaffirms its support for the implementation of resolution 71/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016, at its seventieth session.

Bangladesh

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Government of Bangladesh has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5. Bangladesh has consistently supported previous resolutions on this item in the Assembly and also voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

Barbados

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

Barbados has consistently voted in favour of the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, since it was first introduced in the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session, in 1991.

Barbados reiterates its support for the most recent resolution on the issue, resolution 71/5, and reaffirms its commitment to full implementation at the national level since Barbados has no laws that in any way restrict freedom of trade and navigation with Cuba.

Barbados also welcomes the positive developments in the relationship between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America, notably the re-establishment of diplomatic relations and the continuing dialogue on the lifting of the embargo.

Belarus

[Original: Russian]
[23 May 2017]

Belarus welcomes the steps taken in the period 2015-2017 to restore bilateral relations between the United States of America and Cuba, including the holding of meetings between the leaders of the two countries and resumption of the work of diplomatic missions.

The easing by the United States of certain restrictive measures against Cuba in the banking and tourism sectors, the restoration of direct postal and trade communications and the removal of Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism are important steps in the right direction. However, those steps are clearly insufficient while a general trade embargo against Cuba remains in effect.

Belarus has repeatedly stressed that the imposition of unilateral coercive measures as a means of exerting political and economic pressure on developing countries contravenes the core principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations. Any attempts by certain States to change the domestic political systems of other States using military, political, economic or other forms of pressure are unacceptable.

Belarus therefore welcomes the initiation of a process of normalizing relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America and calls for the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed on Cuba to be lifted fully as soon as possible.

Relations between the Republic of Belarus and the Republic of Cuba are distinguished by a high level of bilateral cooperation. Belarus reaffirms its willingness to continue promoting the deepening of comprehensive cooperation and the fostering of friendly relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Belize

[Original: English]
[9 June 2017]

Belize reaffirms its absolute commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, which are also the fundamental principles of international law. In strict observance of the Charter and of international law, Belize has consistently supported the resolutions denouncing the embargo against Cuba and rejects the extraterritorial application of laws and measures. The ongoing attempt to isolate Cuba, in disregard of the annually adopted resolutions, which enjoy the overwhelming support of States Members of the United Nations, is a flagrant affront to multilateralism and the political will of the international community.

Belize and Cuba maintain a constructive and mutually beneficial partnership which has yielded concrete benefits for all our peoples. Our policy of engagement is further enhanced through regional cooperation between the Caribbean Community and Cuba.

Benin

[Original: French]
[27 April 2017]

In keeping with both the values it holds dearly, which are enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and the fundamental principles of international law, Benin participated actively in the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on 26 October 2016 concerning the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

Benin believes deeply in international solidarity and the virtues of dialogue as appropriate means of settling disputes and restoring trust among States, for the happiness of all peoples.

It supported the previous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, which has profound socioeconomic consequences. The situation that Cuba has endured over the past few decades has prevented the country from obtaining adequate supplies of medicine and participating fully in international trade.

The Government of Benin, which has not promulgated or applied any laws or regulations of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5, has always advocated the rapid and unconditional lifting of the unilateral measures against Cuba, to enable that country to realize its social and economic development.

Benin welcomes the positive and dynamic developments in relations between the Cuban and United States Governments in recent years, which have led to, among other things, the restoration of diplomatic relations with the reopening of the United States embassy in Havana and the authorization of official and private travel between the two countries. These developments represent an important step, but one that has nonetheless not yet resolved the issue of the embargo, which falls under the jurisdiction of the United States Congress.

The Government of Benin hopes sincerely that the United States administration would maintain this peaceful stance and work with the Congress to lift the embargo completely and unconditionally.

Benin wishes to reiterate its commitment to encourage and support all actions designed to promote the nascent constructive dialogue between Cuba and the United States, in the hope that bilateral relations between the two countries would be normalized once and for all, for the happiness and prosperity of the American and Cuban people.

Bhutan

[Original: English]
[9 May 2017]

The Royal Government of Bhutan has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5 and has consistently supported the aforementioned resolution and other resolutions on this matter in the Assembly and voted in favour thereof.

Bolivia (Plurinational State of)

[Original: Spanish]
[17 May 2017]

In January 1959 the Cuban people, in its revolutionary struggles, defeated the dictatorial regime. The revolutionary movement led by Fidel Castro launched a new administration under a socialist regime. In this context, the ideological struggle of the so-called Cold War began, in which the United States sought to expand its sphere of influence, seeking to eliminate the socialist enemy by implementing a series of sanctions designed to crush the Revolution. These sanctions gradually developed into an economic war that has already lasted for more than five decades.

The United Nations has on various occasions spoken out on this issue of the embargo on Cuba. The issue of the embargo was considered by the General Assembly for the first time in 1992, during the forty-seventh session. Since then, it has been submitted every year, with the broad support of United Nations Member States.

On 26 October 2016, during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba was adopted, with the support of 191 of the 193 United Nations Member States. For the first time, there were no votes against the resolution, with just the abstention of the United States and Israel. The resolution recognizes the progress made in bilateral relations and reiterates its call upon all States to refrain from promulgating measures such as the embargo, which are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, and upon States that have applied such measures to repeal them soon as possible.[1]

The embargo is defined by a series of laws that have established prohibitions on, inter alia, commercial, financial and tourism ties. These laws include the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917 (economic sanctions and a prohibition on trade with the enemy or its allies during military conflicts); the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (prohibition against United States nationals conducting financial transactions with Cuba, a freeze on Cuban assets and a prohibition against the import of goods of Cuban origin); The Cuban Democracy Act (Torricelli Act) of 1992 (prohibition against the subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries trading in goods with Cuba or with Cuban nationals, and a ban on ships from third countries that have touched port in Cuba); and the 1996 Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act, or Helms-Burton Act (sanctions on senior officials of foreign companies that conduct transactions with United States property that was nationalized in Cuba and provision for the filing of cases in United States courts).

The embargo has crosscutting and counterproductive effects in all economic, social and cultural areas; sectors such as health, biotechnology, tourism, transport, mining, renewable energy and telecommunications are affected on a daily basis and have suffered substantial losses as a result of this embargo. In this situation, the right to development in Cuba has been restricted by the measures taken by the United States.

The economic damages have amounted to 833,755 million United States dollars over 56 years, according to the most recent report of Cuba to the United Nations.[2] The following losses have been calculated by sector for the period from April 2015 to April 2016: in the public health sector, the cumulative monetary impact since the onset of the embargo is US$ 2,624,100,000; these losses manifest themselves in the inability to purchase, from United States markets, medicines, reagents, spare parts for diagnostic and treatment equipment, medical instruments and other items necessary for the functioning of the sector. In the food sector, the damage amounts to US$ 605,706,289 in the period under review; this is reflected in higher prices for agricultural seed, fertilizers, spare parts for agricultural equipment and other inputs on the geographically distant markets where they must be purchased as they cannot be purchased on the United States market. The tourism industry in Cuba has also suffered severe losses over the period in question, with the impact of this policy amounting to US$ 2,058,250,000.

Although the relations between the United States and Cuba have been at an impasse with hard-line positions for over half a century, a certain degree of relaxation of those relations has been seen over the past decade, as demonstrated by the leaders of the two countries, the former President Barack Obama and President Raul Castro. This rapprochement has led, for the first time in history, to an explicit statement by the United States regarding an end to the embargo and the renewal of diplomatic relations with Cuba. The new era in their relations has facilitated an expansion of cooperation in a number of areas, to the benefit of citizens of both countries. This process has been referred to as seeking a "normalization of relations". The first steps included the reopening of embassies and the removal of Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism.

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[1] See http://www.un.org/spanish/News/story.asp?NewsID=36140#.WQuqerj2Rdk.

[2] EFE, "*Las fechas clave en las relaciones entre Cuba y los Estados Unidos*", 26 November 2016. Available from http://www.abc.es/internacional/abci-fechas-clave-relaciones-entre-cuba-y-estados-unidos-201611260850_noticia.html.

Direct mail services between the two countries have also been restored; regular direct commercial flights between the two countries have been re-established; collaboration on port security has resumed; a memorandum of understanding on the security of maritime navigation has been signed; regulatory changes have been made by the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Trade that, inter alia, promote a greater involvement of United States telecommunications and Internet companies in Cuba to improve connectivity and access to information by Cubans.

Despite the measures taken, the laws and regulations that maintain the embargo are still in force and are implemented by United States Government agencies, especially by the Department of the Treasury, the Department of Trade and the Office of Foreign Assets Control. A significant setback occurred in September 2015 when, in accordance with supposed foreign policy interests, the sanctions against Cuba were renewed under the Trading with the Enemy Act, a key part of the laws and regulations that underpin the embargo.

Exports of Cuban products to the United States are still prohibited, inter alia, and exports from the United States to Cuba are not increasing. For its part, the United States Congress has not approved any of the 20 amendments or legislative initiatives that, with bipartisan support, have proposed eliminating some of the embargo's restrictions. The situation has been aggravated by the introduction of more than 50 legislative initiatives that threaten to reinforce basic aspects of the embargo and to prevent the President from issuing new executive orders or from implementing those already adopted. Furthermore, the legal ban on United States citizens travelling freely to Cuba remains in force. Nor has Cuba been able to make payments or cash deposits in United States dollars in its international transactions — as authorized by the United States Department of the Treasury, owing to the fines and the intimidating effects of the embargo.[3]

Despite the progress made in the process of normalizing relations, there are still signs that the embargo is being maintained in practice, which continues to affect the lives of Cubans. This process therefore requires the political will of various United States agencies that are tacitly facilitating the lifting of the embargo, which is a key factor for progress towards a true normalization of relations between the two countries.

Bolivian position regarding the embargo against Cuba

The Bolivian Government firmly condemns and rejects any unilateral, excessive, unjust or illegal action or measure taken by the United States of America against the Cuban people and Government. The United States, through a persistent and targeted economic, commercial and financial embargo for over half a century, has attempted to crush the will of the Cuban people.

Although the United States has not achieved its goals with its coercive measures, it has for a number of decades inflicted economic hardship on the long-suffering Cuban people and has caused substantial economic damage to the country, impeding its full development. In these circumstances, the Cuban people have always responded with dignity and with actions of solidarity towards all countries and peoples of the world, and not with the immorality with which they have been treated by the United States.

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[3] In a statement made by the representative of Cuba, Mr. Bruno Rodriguez Parrilla, at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly (see A/71/PV.32).

This embargo is a flagrant, systematic and widespread violation of the human rights of the Cuban people. It is a criminal act and amounts to an act of genocide according to article II of the 1948 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide; it also amounts to an act of economic warfare, according to the Declaration concerning the Laws of Naval War, adopted in 1909.

When the human rights of a people are being systematically violated to the point of genocide, when international law is being continuously contravened in respect of international norms of trade, the freedom of navigation and international humanitarian law, the international community cannot remain silent. The United States embargo against Cuba is not a bilateral issue. The embargo is an act of unilateral aggression by the United States that violates the foundations, principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations.

The disregard and disrespect of the United States for the opinion of the international community concerning the embargo against Cuba, which has been expressed through repeated General Assembly resolutions in which the United States embargo is almost unanimously rejected, demonstrates the double standards of that country with regard to the Charter of the United Nations and the peoples of the world.

Moreover, the Plurinational State of Bolivia has economic cooperation and complementarity agreements with the countries of the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America — Peoples' Trade Agreement (Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua and Venezuela, inter alia), which facilitate their commercial relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Bilateral relations between Bolivia and Cuba are based on the principles of justice and the unity of the peoples of our America, with the aim of expanding their participation in the international economy and strengthening their cooperation and trade. Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 47 of 4 February 2009, which is in force and fully applicable, provides for market access facilities and complete trade liberalization, in what has been termed fair trade for our peoples.

The Plurinational State of Bolivia has consistently acknowledged and expressed appreciation for the efforts of Cuba in its cooperation in solidarity with Bolivia, in particular in education and health.

In various international forums, the Plurinational State of Bolivia has unconditionally supported resolutions and declarations expressing rejection of the embargo against Cuba. At the Seventh Summit of the Americas, held in Panama on 10 and 11 April 2015, President Evo Morales reaffirmed his support for Cuba and said that the United States, in addition to lifting the unjust embargo, should compensate Cuba for all of the harm it had caused Cuba over the past 50 years.

In its Special Declaration adopted on 28 January 2016, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) reiterated its "strongest rejection of economic coercive measures not supported by international law, including all those unilateral actions imposed on sovereign countries for political reasons that impair the well-being of their peoples and are designed to prevent these countries from exercising their right to decide, by their own free will, their political, economic and social systems".

As a member of CELAC, Bolivia welcomes "the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of

America, the opening of their respective embassies and other initiatives taken to further bilateral ties", and, during the presidency of President Obama, had urged him to take all actions within his executive powers to substantially modify the application of the embargo against Cuba, and had requested the United States Congress to proceed with its elimination.

Against this background, Bolivia joins in solidarity with and fully endorses the self-determination of the Cuban people and the exercise of their sovereign right to live in accordance with the political system established by the people.

Bolivia will continue to express its consistent support at subsequent sessions of the General Assembly by voting in favour of the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, until the United States has ceased its harassment of the island.

Bolivia firmly states that the United States embargo against the Republic of Cuba must be ended unconditionally, unilaterally and immediately.

General Assembly resolution 71/5

On paragraphs 2 and 3

The Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia has not adopted any laws or measures that are contrary to the spirit of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and would infringe on the freedom of trade or navigation, and regrets that other States have resorted to this illegal, harmful and inhumane practice in violation of international law.

On paragraph 4

The Government of Bolivia requests the Secretary-General of the United Nations, in accordance with this paragraph, to continue to report on implementation of the resolution by all States Members of the United Nations. In the resolution, it is suggested that they refrain from applying laws and measures relating to an economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on any country, and in particular the embargo that exists against the Republic of Cuba, as it not only violates the sovereignty of that State but also the sovereignty of all other States of the international community.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

[Original: English]
[6 April 2017]

Bosnia and Herzegovina, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, supported General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Bosnia and Herzegovina has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 71/5 and is ready to develop cooperation with Cuba at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Botswana

[Original: English]
[8 May 2017]

The Republic of Botswana has never promulgated, applied or enforced any laws and measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5, nor does it intend to. As reflected by its vote on the resolution, Botswana is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures, and in this regard, supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Brazil

[Original: English]
[7 July 2017]

Brazil reiterates its firm opposition to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba as well as to the extraterritorial application of discriminatory domestic trade laws.

For decades, Brazil has been condemning the embargo and advocating for the normalization of the relations between the United States and Cuba. Along with the countries of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), Brazil considers that the return to Cuba of the occupied territory of the Guantánamo Naval Base is a relevant element in the normalization process. This concern, as well as the need to put an end to the embargo, have been reflected in the declaration adopted by CELAC on the occasion of its fifth summit, held on 25 January 2017.

The rejection of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba since 1962 is a virtual international consensus. It is illustrated by the fact that the most recent General Assembly resolution on the matter, 71/5, was approved by 191 votes in favour, two abstentions and no vote against it. This result reflected the widest support for the resolution since 1992.

Brazil welcomes the measures implemented in the course of the normalization of the relations between the two countries, which pointed towards the flexibilization of the embargo and included easing restrictions on travel, remittances, financial transactions and trade between both countries; enhancing the Cuban population's access to the Internet and other telecommunications services; and amending the United States sanctions regime against Cuba regarding third countries.

Intensifying economic relations with Cuba is the correct path that should be followed by all countries interested in supporting the development of the island and the improvement of the living conditions of millions of Cuban citizens. The embargo harms the Cuban people, mainly the poorest ones, who suffer the impact of such unilateral measures through economic uncertainty and unemployment.

Brunei Darussalam

[Original: English]
[25 April 2017]

Brunei Darussalam reaffirms its support for all General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. Brunei Darussalam is against the use of unilateral sanctions in view of their adverse effects on the development of Member States. More importantly, unilateral sanctions contradict international law and the Charter of the United Nations. On that basis, Brunei Darussalam has not introduced or applied any laws or measures inconsistent with General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Burkina Faso

[Original: French]
[19 May 2017]

The Government of Burkina Faso considers embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba to be not only contrary to the purposes, principles and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, but also a violation of the fundamental norms of international law, international humanitarian law, international trade law and human rights.

Consequently, although it welcomes the measures taken with a view to normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States, Burkina Faso reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States as well as freedom of trade and navigation, which are fundamental principles of international law.

For those reasons, Burkina Faso, a peace and justice-loving country that fully subscribes to the principle of the sovereign equality of States, as advocated in the Charter of the United Nations, opposes the continuation of this embargo.

In accordance with the obligations of the Charter and international law, Burkina Faso has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution 71/5 of 26 October 2016.

Burkina Faso, which believes in the virtue of dialogue and negotiation, reiterates its wish for the embargo to be lifted and urges the parties concerned to continue working toward a peaceful settlement of their dispute, in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter.

Burundi

[Original: French]
[10 April 2017]

The position of the Government of Burundi has always been to oppose this embargo, which is inconsistent with international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States. Burundi has never applied this embargo and does not intend to apply it in the future.

Cabo Verde

[Original: English]
[10 May 2017]

The Republic of Cabo Verde, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the National Constitution and in conformity with the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which promotes solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among countries and nations, has never promulgated or applied any law or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Cabo Verde, which has always voted in favour of lifting the embargo, maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation with Cuba.

Cambodia

[Original: English]
[28 April 2017]

With reference to General Assembly resolution 71/5, the Royal Government of Cambodia conveys its unwavering position to call upon the United States of America to completely and unilaterally lift all illegal sanctions against Cuba so as to put an end to the long-time suffering of Cuban people and render them justice.

The Royal Government of Cambodia wishes to call for the respect of the above-mentioned resolution by all Member States.

Cameroon

[Original: French]
[7 July 2017]

Cameroon is committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of commerce enshrined in many international legal instruments.

In the implementation of resolution 71/5, entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016, as well as previous resolutions on the topic, and in accordance with the above-mentioned principles, Cameroon has never adopted legislative or other measures with a view to strengthening or expanding the embargo imposed on Cuba.

Cameroon has always voted in favour of lifting the embargo and maintains excellent relations of friendship and cooperation with Cuba.

Canada

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Government of Canada reconfirms its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5. Canadian law states that no Canadian corporation shall, in respect of any trade or commerce between Canada and Cuba, comply with an extraterritorial measure of the kind referred to in the resolution. Canada congratulates the United States and Cuba, our neighbours, for the efforts to normalize bilateral relations and hopes that this process will bring about the end of the embargo against Cuba.

Central African Republic

[Original: French]
[15 May 2017]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba has caused tremendous harm to the Government and people of Cuba in all spheres of activity. The embargo has long been denounced and the General Assembly has adopted several resolutions against it, the most recent of which was resolution 71/5, adopted on 26 October 2016 by 191 votes. While everyone was expecting the embargo to be completely lifted after the normalization of diplomatic relations between the two countries on 17 December 2014, it should be noted that it remains in place.

Mindful of its commitments to the international community and in compliance with the Charter of the United Nations, the Central African Republic considers this embargo to be contrary to international law in general and international humanitarian law in particular. Furthermore, the Government of the Central African Republic will continue to support the Government of Cuba until the embargo has been completely lifted and calls on the United States Government to act in strict compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations regarding international cooperation and solidarity and good-neighbourly relations.

The abstention by the United States on 26 October 2016 is already an encouraging and promising sign.

Chad

[Original: French]
[31 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Chad welcomes the improved relations between the Governments of the United States and Cuba over the past year and notes the encouraging measures taken by the United States Government to modify certain aspects of the application of the embargo.

Although the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba is commendable, the embargo is clearly still in place, seriously penalizing the Cuban people and undermining the country's economic development.

While reiterating the calls from Member States and international organizations, including the African Union, for the complete lifting of the embargo, the Chadian Government, referring also to paragraph 30 of resolution 70/1 on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, calls on States to avoid adopting or applying unilateral economic, financial or commercial measures that are inconsistent with international law or the Charter of the United Nations and that prevent the full realization of economic and social development, especially in developing countries.

The Government of the Republic of Chad urges the Governments of the United States and Cuba to continue their dialogue and the rekindling of the process they are engaged in, for the mutually beneficial development of the people of the two countries and of the world as a whole.

Chile

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2017]

The Republic of Chile highlights the progress made in the process of normalizing the relations between the United States of America and Cuba, which began in December 2014. Chile encourages the parties to continue their willingness to overcome their past differences and reiterates the hope that this historic turning point leads to an end to all unilateral measures affecting economic, commercial and financial ties with Cuba in accordance with General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Chile has consistently supported Cuba in connection with the resolution presented in the General Assembly each year to condemn the unilateral embargo imposed by the United States. The Republic of Chile reiterates that the embargo against Cuba entails a violation of the norms and principles of international law, particularly those concerning the equality of States, non-interference in internal affairs and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Moreover, Chile wishes to report that it has not approved any measures aimed at restricting normal trade and economic relations between Chile and Cuba. Chile supports the full and free exercise of the right to trade and to establish business relations in the international arena, with no restrictions other than those corresponding to activities classified as illegal under Chilean law and the restrictions imposed by the international community in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations.

China

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

For 25 consecutive years, the General Assembly has adopted, by an overwhelming majority, resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States and urging all countries to comply with the rules of international law and the Charter of the United Nations and to repeal or nullify any laws and measures, the extraterritorial effects of which encroach upon the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities and individuals within their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Regrettably, over the years there has been no effective implementation of the resolutions and the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States on Cuba has yet to be lifted. Not only is this contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, it has also caused immense economic and financial losses to Cuba, has hindered efforts by the Cuban people to eradicate poverty, to promote their economic and social development and to attain the goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, has impaired the right to survival and the right to development of the Cuban people and has also disrupted the normal economic, commercial and financial relations between Cuba and other countries.

China has always advocated respect for the right of countries to choose their own social system and path of development independently, and has opposed the imposition by military, political, economic or any other means of unilateral sanctions on other countries. China has always strictly abided by and implemented the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly. China and Cuba maintain sound economic and trade relations and conduct personnel exchanges, and the mutually beneficial and friendly cooperation between the two countries in various areas continues to grow. This is in line with the aspirations of the people of both countries, and is also conducive to the economic and social development of Cuba.

Against the backdrop of today's multipolar world, economic globalization, cultural diversity and the democratization of international relations, there is a growing trend towards communication and cooperation on an equal footing between countries. When differences arise between countries, equal dialogue and friendly consultation offer the best means of reaching a settlement. China notes that the United States has taken measures to lift restrictions on Cuba in the field of commerce and trade, while many limitations still remain. China hopes that the United States and Cuba will continue the process of normalization of relations, and calls upon the United States to lift its embargo against Cuba fully and as soon as possible, and to develop normal inter-State relations with Cuba in accordance with the purposes and principles of the Charter and the basic norms governing international relations. This is in line with the shared interests of the United States and Cuba and of the people of those two countries, will promote peace and stability throughout the Americas and will be beneficial to the international community as a whole.

Colombia

[Original: Spanish]
[18 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Colombia, in accordance with the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, reiterates that it has neither promulgated nor applied any unilateral laws or measures against Cuba or any other Member State, in keeping with its policy of respect for international law and commitment to the principles of political independence, self-determination of peoples, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations.

Consequently, Colombia promotes the independent development of the internal policies of every nation and believes that any measure that undermines economic and commercial development and the well-being of the population should cease.

Furthermore, Colombia believes that Member States must make progress in building cooperative and friendly relations on the basis of multilateralism and respect for the principle of sovereign equality and other provisions enshrined in Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations.

Comoros

[Original: English]
[5 May 2017]

Taking into account all the steps which are being taken towards the normalization of the relationship between Cuba and the United States of America, the Government of the Union of the Comoros reaffirms its obligation under the Charter of the United Nations and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws or regulations with extraterritorial effects which could affect the sovereignty of other States.

To move forward with the normalization process of bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States of America, the Government of the Union of the Comoros supports the immediate lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba for the benefit of the countries and people who expect to develop relations in all those sectors.

Congo

[Original: French]
[10 April 2017]

The Government of the Republic of the Congo strongly condemns all these coercive measures that are unjustly imposed on Cuba and that are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and international law. It therefore rejects the embargo imposed unilaterally on Cuba by the United States. The Government of the Republic of the Congo encourages the two countries to develop friendly and fraternal relations for the benefit of their respective peoples. It considers that the openness shown by the United States administration over the past two years will contribute to a rapprochement between the two countries.

Costa Rica

[Original: Spanish]
[20 June 2017]

In keeping with its policy of compliance with international law and the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Costa Rica has traditionally supported Cuba with regard to the resolution presented annually to the General Assembly on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America. In that vein, Costa Rica reiterates its opposition to the current unilateral policy imposed against Cuba through the Helms-Burton Act, which constitutes a real obstacle to international trade.

Costa Rica has defended the right of peoples to self-determination and the principles of political independence, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other nations, and deplores any measure that negatively affects the well-being of the civilian population.

Accordingly, Costa Rica welcomes each nation's freedom to establish its own internal policies, while considering it essential that the Cuban authorities move forward in accordance with democratic standards, with full respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

In accordance with resolution 71/5 and previous General Assembly resolutions, Costa Rica wishes to report that it has neither promulgated nor applied any national law or measure with extraterritorial effects that could impact on the sovereignty of other States or freedom of trade and navigation. To that end, Costa Rica has consistently stressed, at both the regional and international levels, the need to lift the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, because it believes that, after so many decades, it is the people of Cuba who have suffered the most.

Costa Rica is firmly convinced that it is only through dialogue, multilateral mechanisms and international law that differences between countries should be addressed. In keeping with this fundamental foreign policy position, it reiterates its total rejection of unilateral and extraterritorial measures applied by any State against another through the imposition of its own laws and legal system. Similarly, Costa Rica has reiterated that any type of political, economic or military sanction imposed on States must result from a decision or recommendation made by the Security Council or General Assembly.

Costa Rica also considers it indispensable that Member States make progress in building ties of cooperation and friendship based on multilateralism and the other provisions enshrined in Chapter I of the Charter of the United Nations. In that spirit, Costa Rica reiterates its support for the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba and believes that the time has come to pay greater attention to the international community's repeated and near-unanimous calls for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba, with the aim of making progress in the full normalization of ties between the two countries.

The Government of Costa Rica recognizes Cuba as a strategic actor in the region and one of the country's main trading partners in the Caribbean. The State visit to Cuba in 2015 by the Costa Rican President, Luis Guillermo Solís Rivera, not only consolidated the formalization of diplomatic relations, but also galvanized bilateral trade and strengthened cooperation in areas of mutual interest, such as higher education, cooperation in scientific and technical exchange, health, high-performance sports and foreign trade.

Furthermore, on 15 March 2017, a memorandum of understanding was signed on cooperation between the Ministry of Science, Technology and Telecommunications of Costa Rica and the Ministry of Science, Technology and the Environment of the Republic of Cuba.

The memorandum aims to promote and facilitate cooperation in science, technology and innovation. It also seeks a development orientation and the coordination of joint activities to support and complement programmes to strengthen human talent in priority areas that have been agreed upon with a view to aligning efforts and achieving common objectives in the area of science, technology and innovation.

The collaboration is intended to cover the development and promotion of academic activities, research and innovation and mainly addresses the promotion, strengthening and implementation of cooperative activities in science, technology and innovation and the facilitation and encouragement of the participation of relevant institutions. Lastly, the objective is to generate opportunities for mobility and exchange among scientists, researchers and professionals working in the development and transfer of technological science and research.

Therefore, the objectives set out in the memorandum shall be considered to be the science and technology priorities in the context of the related objectives, plans, projects and institutional strategies, in addition to mutual contributions through the technical expertise and the linkage of various academic, governmental and business sectors.

Côte d'Ivoire

[Original: French]
[17 May 2017]

The Ivorian Government has never promulgated any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5. In keeping with its policy of openness and peaceful resolution of disputes, the Ivorian Government has always voted in favour of the previous resolutions on this issue.

In the light of recent sociopolitical developments, Côte d'Ivoire encourages constructive dialogue among all stakeholders and reaffirms its readiness to work with the entire international community to find appropriate solutions to this issue, with full respect for the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Côte d'Ivoire welcomes the efforts made by the Secretary-General and reaffirms its support for the full lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo, which would enable Cuba to contribute effectively to the development efforts of the international community.

Cuba

[Original: Spanish]
[5 July 2017]

Introduction

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba for almost 60 years remains in place and continues to harm the Cuban people and to pose obstacles to the economic development of the country. The purpose of the present report is to present a summary of the impact of this policy between April 2016 and June 2017.

On 16 June 2017, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, signed the National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba. The directive establishes a new policy, one of the main objectives of which is a tightening of the embargo against the island.

To achieve this goal, President Trump announced new coercive measures against Cuba and ordered the overturning of other measures taken by his predecessor, who had modified the implementation of certain aspects of the embargo in the areas of travel and trade. In addition, he proclaimed that the United States would oppose calls for the lifting of the embargo at the United Nations and in other international forums, in clear defiance of the overwhelming position of the international community, the majority of public opinion and broad sectors of society in the United States. In addition, he repealed the Presidential Policy Directive entitled "United States-Cuba Normalization", issued by the then President Barack Obama on 14 October 2016, which had recognized that the embargo was an outdated policy and should be lifted.

The embargo against Cuba remains in force and is applied rigorously.

In the period covered by the present report, the financial and extraterritorial aspects of the embargo have been intensified, a situation that has become more serious since the Administration of President Barack Obama and which has taken the form of fines imposed on foreign companies that have commercial relations with Cuba, a refusal by banks and international financial institutions to conduct transactions with the island for fear of being fined, and interference with Cuban international financial transactions.

Despite the announcement by the United States Department of the Treasury on 15 March 2016 that Cuba would be allowed to use the United States dollar in its international transactions and that United States banks could offer Cuban importers credit to purchase authorized United States products, to date Cuba has not been able to conduct any significant international transactions using the dollar. The increase in the aggressive rhetoric against Cuba and the measures announced on 16 June 2017 generate greater mistrust and uncertainty in financial institutions and in United States providers themselves owing to the fear, and the real risk, of being penalized for doing business with Cuba.

The present report shows how the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba is the greatest impediment to the implementation of the country's national plan for economic and social development and to the overall development of the full potential of the Cuban economy and the well-being of the Cuban people, and also to the country's economic, commercial and financial relations with the United States and the rest of the world. The report lists various examples that demonstrate the social and economic damage caused by the embargo during the aforementioned period.

The report contains an explanation of the limited scope of the measures taken by the Administration of President Obama in his last two years in office.

The accumulated losses caused by the embargo during the nearly six decades it has been in place amount to $822.28 billion, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market. At current prices, the embargo has caused quantifiable losses of more than $130,178,600,000.

During the period covered by this report, the embargo has caused Cuba losses of approximately $4,305,400,000. To put this figure into perspective, according to estimates made by the Cuban Ministry of Economic Affairs and Planning, the country needs between $2 billion and $2.5 billion in foreign direct investment each year to assure its economic development. In other words, the annual cost of the embargo to Cuba is about twice what it needs for the full development of its economy.

The embargo continues to be a massive, flagrant and systematic violation of the human rights of all Cuban men and women and qualifies as an act of genocide under the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. It is an obstacle to international cooperation.

It is vital that the United States comply with the 25 resolutions adopted by the international community in the General Assembly, whose Member States have called for an end to the absurd policy, and that it unilaterally and unconditionally lift the embargo.

The Cuban embargo must now cease once and for all.

I. Continuity of the embargo policy

1.1. The embargo laws remain in force

Notwithstanding the measures taken by the Government of President Obama in 2015 and 2016 to modify the implementation of certain aspects of the embargo, the laws and regulations that support the policy remain in effect and are enforced by United States Government agencies, especially the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Commerce, and more particularly by the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC).

This may be seen from the laws and regulations in force, which are listed below:

- The Trading with the Enemy Act (TWEA) of 1917, section 5(b) of which provides that the President may impose economic sanctions in time of war or any other national emergency, and prohibits trading with the enemy or with allies of the enemy during hostilities. In 1977, the International Emergency Economic Powers Act restricted the powers of the President to impose new sanctions, referring to national emergency situations. However, TWEA has remained in effect against Cuba, even though the White House has never declared a national emergency with respect to Cuba. Since then, successive United States Presidents have extended the application of TWEA to Cuba. Under cover of that legislation, the oldest of its kind, the Cuban Assets Control Regulations (CACR) were adopted in 1963: they prohibited United States nationals or persons subject to United States jurisdiction from conducting financial transactions with Cuba, froze Cuban assets, and banned the import of goods of Cuban origin into the United States, among other restrictions. Cuba is the only country to which this legislation applies. On 13 September 2016, President Obama renewed the sanctions against Cuba for another year, under the terms of TWEA.
- The Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 authorized the United States President to establish and maintain a total embargo upon trade with Cuba, and prohibited the granting of any aid to the Cuban Government. It also provided that United States Government funds earmarked for international aid and delivered to international agencies could not be used for programmes involving Cuba. It prohibited the granting to Cuba of any assistance mentioned in the Act or any other benefit mentioned in any other law until such time as the President

determined that Cuba had taken action to return to United States citizens and entities no less than 50 per cent of the value of properties nationalized by the Cuban Government following the triumph of the Revolution, or to provide equitable compensation for such properties.

- Presidential Proclamation 3447, issued on 3 February 1962 by President John F. Kennedy, decreed a total embargo on trade between the United States and Cuba, pursuant to section 620(a) of the Foreign Assistance Act.
- The Cuban Assets Control Regulations of the Department of the Treasury (1963) froze all Cuban assets in the United States, prohibited all financial and commercial transactions unless approved under a licence, prohibited Cuban exports to the United States and prohibited any natural or legal person from the United States or third countries from conducting transactions in United States dollars with Cuba, among other provisions.
- The Export Administration Act of 1979. Under Section 2401(b)(1), "National Security Controls", "Policy toward individual countries", a Commerce Control List is established, on which the United States President keeps a number of countries for which special export controls may be imposed for reasons of national security. Cuba is included on the list.
- The Export Administration Regulations of 1979 establish the grounds for general controls over items and activities subject to Export Administration Regulations control, consistent with the sanctions imposed by the United States Government. They establish a general policy of denying exports and re-exports to Cuba.
- The Cuban Democracy Act ("Torricelli Act") of 1992 prohibits the subsidiaries of United States companies in third countries from trading in goods with Cuba or with Cuban nationals. It bans third-country vessels that have visited a Cuban port from entering United States territory within 180 days, except for those that have a licence from the Secretary of the Treasury.
- The Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (Libertad) Act ("Helms-Burton Act") of 1996 codifies the provisions of the embargo and expands its extraterritorial scope through the imposition of penalties on directors of foreign companies that conduct transactions involving United States property nationalized in Cuba and the threat of lawsuits in United States courts (the latter has not been applied). The Act also limits the powers of the United States President to suspend the embargo even though it stipulates that the President retains the power to authorize transactions with Cuba through the issuance of licences.
- Section 211 of the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act for fiscal year 1999 prohibits United States courts from recognizing the rights of Cuban companies to trademarks associated with nationalized property.
- The Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 authorizes the export of agricultural products to Cuba, conditional upon payment in cash and in advance, and without United States financing. It prohibits travel to Cuba for tourist activities by United States persons, defining tourist activity as any activity involving travel to, from or within Cuba that is not explicitly authorized under Title 31, Section 515.560, of the Code of Federal Regulations. In other words, it limits travel to the 12 categories authorized when it was enacted.

1.2. Executive measures taken by President Barack Obama and their limitations

In 2015 and 2016, the Government of President Obama put in place a number of measures to modify the implementation of certain elements of the embargo. Although these were positive steps, they were insufficient, as significant obstacles to their implementation remain and key aspects of the embargo, together with numerous restrictions resulting from the policy, have remained in force.

With respect to travel, United States persons were granted permission to visit Cuba under a general licence in the 12 categories authorized by law; the resumption of regular flights between Cuba and the United States was agreed; the carriage by sea of passengers who fell within the 12 categories was permitted; and individual "people-to-people" educational trips were authorized but are no longer permitted under the Government of President Donald Trump. United States citizens are still prohibited from travelling freely to Cuba.

In the telecommunications sector, exports of products and services to Cuba, financing for the creation of infrastructure, the possibility of establishing joint ventures with Cuban entities, the import to the United States of software of Cuban origin and direct payments to a telecommunications operator located in Cuba have all been authorized. However, these measures have not been extended to other sectors of the Cuban economy, which remain subject to severe restrictions under the embargo.

When it comes to trade, the list of United States products that may be exported to Cuba without the need to seek authorization from the Department of Commerce is confined to telecommunications products and services, construction materials, and equipment and tools for use by the non-state sector of the economy, including agriculture. The sale of other United States products and services to Cuba is prohibited unless authorized by the Department of Commerce through the issuance of specific licences, which expire after a fixed period of time.

The authorization to import Cuban goods and services into the United States is confined to those produced by the non-state sector and excludes items of key importance for the Cuban economy, such as tobacco. By not including the state sector of the economy, with the exception of pharmaceutical and biotechnology products, the list excludes Cuban goods and services of recognized international prestige such as rum, nickel and medical and educational services. Moreover, the tariffs that would be applied to Cuban products, if they were allowed to enter United States territory, would be set at the highest rates of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States International Trade Commission, since Cuba is placed at the most restrictive level of duties for import and is not accorded most favoured nation treatment on account of the embargo.

The amendments to the maritime transportation regulations, which allow vessels that are engaged in humanitarian trade with Cuba or that carry goods on the Commerce Control List of the Department of Commerce to enter United States ports before 180 days, are inoperable. It is unlikely that vessels carrying commercial cargoes to Cuba will confine themselves to transporting only goods authorized by the United States. International practice indicates that contracts with shipping companies are not restricted to the transportation of only one kind of product.

With regard to finance, although the use of the dollar has been authorized for the international transactions of Cuba, and United States banks provide credit to Cuban importers of permitted United States products, in practice it has not been possible to conduct significant transactions using the dollar because financial institutions and United States providers themselves remain fearful of doing business with Cuba owing to the risks involved in dealing with a country under a sanctions regime.

Another major constraint is that Cuban financial institutions are barred from opening correspondent accounts in United States banks, which prevents the establishment of direct banking relationships between the two countries and makes the few commercial transactions with the United States more expensive owing to the need to use intermediaries and pay their commissions. The adverse effects of intensified interference with Cuban transactions and the distinctly extraterritorial character of that interference over the past 11 years continue to be evident in the persistent refusal of banks from the United States and other countries to effect transfers related to Cuba, even in currencies other than the United States dollar.

1.3. New measures taken by the current United States Government to tighten the embargo

On 16 June 2017, as part of his new policy towards Cuba, the President of the United States, Donald Trump, announced new measures to tighten the embargo against our country.

The measures described in the directive signed by President Trump that day, entitled "National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba", are as follows:

1. A ban on economic, commercial and financial transactions between United States companies and entities and Cuban companies and entities linked to the armed forces and the Ministry of the Interior.
2. The elimination of individual trips under the category of people-to-people exchanges.
3. The strict implementation, through strengthened monitoring, of the ban on travel to Cuba outside the framework of the 12 categories authorized by United States law, which exclude tourist travel.
4. United States opposition to actions that promote the lifting of the embargo at the United Nations and in other international forums.
5. The expansion of the list of Cuban Government officials and citizens who will not be able to receive visas or remittances or engage in transactions with United States entities.
6. The repeal of the Presidential Policy Directive entitled "United States-Cuba Normalization", issued by President Obama on 14 October 2016.

These new executive orders reversed measures taken by the Obama Administration which, for the first time since the announcement of the embargo against Cuba, acknowledged that the policy was flawed, obsolete and should be ended, and urged the United States Congress to abolish it.

The strengthening of the United States sanctions regime against Cuba is a setback in bilateral relations which further hinders the very limited economic and commercial ties between the two countries. The measures taken by President Trump will not only lead to a decrease in travel by United States citizens to Cuba, but will also impose new bans and affect the interests of the United States business sector.

The Engage Cuba organization, together with a large group of United States institutions and public figures that advocate the lifting of the embargo on Cuba, issued a report in June 2017 which shows that the measures imposed by the Trump Administration prevented, in the short and medium term, the creation of 12,295 jobs and resulted in lost revenue of over $6.6 billion.

The tightening of the embargo against Cuba ignores the calls by members of Congress, including Republicans, and by the business sector, various organizations, the press and the United States public, to support a relationship that will benefit both peoples and Governments in the most diverse areas of economic and social life.

1.4. Principal embargo measures applied since May 2016

The embargo against Cuba has remained in force, as demonstrated by the following examples of the effects of the policy on Cuban entities and on third parties:

- On 7 June 2016, it was reported that Banco Santander had cancelled point-of-sale terminal services to the Consulate General of Cuba in Seville, Spain, despite the fact that a service contract had previously been signed between the two entities.
- On 20 June 2016, the Netherlands mail and parcels company TNT returned to the Consulate General of Cuba in Madrid two postal consignments addressed to the embassies of Cuba in China and Indonesia containing passports of Cubans living abroad. The company claimed that it had returned the consignments owing to corporate instructions related to the United States embargo against Cuba.
- On 1 August 2016, the Netherlands company TNT terminated its postal services for the Cuban Consulate in Rotterdam, the Netherlands.
- On 10 August 2016, the United Kingdom subsidiary of United States company Amazon refused to process orders for the Cuban embassy in London because they were in violation of the economic regulations it had to comply with.
- On 7 September 2016, it was reported that, in August 2015, OFAC had officially announced the imposition of a $100,000 fine against the President of the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy Foundation, United States citizen Albert A. Fox Jr., for violating the embargo regulations on two trips to Cuba in August 2010 and September 2011. The case is awaiting trial.
- On 13 September 2016, the then President of the United States, Barack Obama, extended for one year the implementation of the economic sanctions against Cuba pursuant to the legal framework established in TWEA.
- On 12 October 2016, two transfers from accounts belonging to the Cuban embassies in Turkey and Germany were blocked. In the first case, the Turkish merchant bank Türkiye İş Bankası refused to process a transfer of €60,000 intended to assist in recovery efforts in the areas affected by Hurricane Matthew. In the second case, the German bank Commerzbank (intermediary) refused to send two payment forms for a bank transfer in euros to the Stanbik Bank account of the Cuban embassy in Botswana, arguing that Cuba was one of the countries subject to United States financial sanctions.
- On 14 November 2016, the multinational oil company National Oilwell Varco, based in Texas, and its subsidiaries Dreco Energy Services and National Oilwell Varco Elmar, agreed with OFAC to pay a fine of $5,976,028 for alleged violations of the sanctions against Cuba, Iran and the Sudan. According to the text of the penalty order, between 2007 and 2009 the subsidiary Dreco Energy Services conducted 45 transactions involving the sale of goods to Cuba worth $1,707,964, while between 2007 and 2008, the subsidiary Elmar conducted two transactions involving the sale of goods and services to Cuba worth $103,119.

- On 23 December 2016, the Malaysian bank Maybank (Malayan Banking Berhad) refused to carry out a transfer from the Cuban embassy in Malaysia to the lawyer who is in charge of the embassy premises (and who lives in the Philippines) because Cuba is subject to a United States sanctions regime.

- On 12 January 2017, OFAC fined the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy Foundation and an individual $10,000 for conducting unauthorized transactions on behalf of 20 persons, and providing them with unauthorized services, in relation to two trips to Cuba in 2010 and 2011.

- On 13 January 2017, OFAC imposed a fine of $516,105 on the Canadian Bank Toronto-Dominion Bank and its subsidiaries Internaxx Bank and TD Waterhouse Investment Services (Europe) Limited. It was alleged that between 2007 and 2011 the banking institution processed 29 transactions related to Cuba through the United States banking system.

- On 2 March 2017, the Belgian subsidiary of French bank BNP Paribas refused to carry out a transfer in euros from the Cuban embassy in Spain to the company European Forax Services, allegedly because of international restrictions on the acceptance of transactions on behalf of Cuba. The transfer was to pay for the fuel used by the Cuban embassy.

- On 9 March 2017, the Netherlands bank Rabobank refused to accept a transfer from the Cuban embassy in Spain, through Spanish bank Sabadell, to the Netherlands company Bax Music Goes, claiming possible OFAC restrictions because there might be a United States element in the payment. The transfer was for €311 and was for the purchase of props for the theatre of the Cuban embassy in Madrid.

- On 11 April 2017, the Canadian bank HSBC Bank Canada, the Canadian subsidiary of British banking group HSBC, refused to accept a transaction from the Canadian company Reuven International intended for the Cuban consulate in Toronto because it was linked to Cuba. The transaction was made in Canadian dollars.

- On 11 April 2017, the United States company Amazon closed the accounts of the staff of the Cuban diplomatic mission to the United Nations, claiming that they had to comply with United States regulations.

- On 9 May 2017, the company Super Micro Computer refused to prepare a quotation for the Cuban embassy in Spain for the purchase of various pieces of computer equipment through the company Aryan Communications on the grounds that its headquarters was in United States territory.

- In May 2017, ING Bank, based in the Netherlands, rejected a payment by Cuba for its membership of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States, based in Brussels. The management of the Netherlands bank justified its refusal by referring to the fact that Cuba is a country under sanctions imposed by OFAC.

- On 8 June 2017, OFAC fined American Honda Finance Corporation $87,255 because a subsidiary in Canada, Honda Canada Finance, had approved and financed 13 car lease agreements between the Cuban embassy in Canada and a Honda dealer in Ottawa between February 2011 and March 2014. On 30 March 2015, the same company had refused a transfer from the Cuban embassy in Canada intended to pay for a replacement vehicle fleet that was to be have been provided by the company.

II. The embargo violates the rights of the Cuban people: damage that has the greatest social impact

2.1. Right to health and food

Article 50 of the Constitution of the Republic of Cuba stipulates that all citizens have the right to health care and protection. Since the triumph of the Revolution in 1959, the guarantee of free medical care for the entire population of the country has been an inviolable principle for the Cuban Government, despite the negative impact of the embargo and other attacks against Cuba over all these years.

The attempt to bring the Cuban people to its knees through hunger and disease has meant that the public health and food sectors remain among the targets of the embargo imposed by the United States.

The cumulative monetary impact of this policy on public health in Cuba since the beginning of the embargo is $2,711,600,000, while during the period covered in this report the losses amount to more than $87 million. This is an increase of more than $4 million compared to the period from April 2015 to April 2016. This sum, however, does not reflect the actual damage to human health as a whole, including the psychological impact, which by its very nature can never be calculated.

The main impacts of the policy on the Cuban people lie in the difficulty of purchasing, from United States markets, medicines, reagents, spare parts for diagnostic and treatment equipment, medical instruments and other items necessary for the functioning of the sector. During the past year, MediCuba, the Cuban company that imports and exports medical products, made several requests to purchase supplies from 18 United States companies. Of these, 14 had not responded at the time of writing of this report, despite the fact that many were contacted on more than one occasion. In cases where a positive response was received, the companies had to apply to the United States Department of the Treasury for a licence, which in some cases took eight months to be issued.

Despite these direct contacts with suppliers in the United States, and several scientific and academic exchanges with the United States, in most cases purchases of products and technologies needed in the sector still have to be made in geographically distant markets, and are expensive in terms of costs, insurance, freight, trans-shipment, handling, storage, time and the use of intermediaries in commercial transactions.

Examples that demonstrate the damage to the health sector during the reference period include the following:

- The Cuban State does not have hospitals with some of the state-of-the-art technologies and technical equipment produced exclusively in the United States for the treatment of certain diseases. For that reason, and in order to ensure universal access to free and high-quality health services for all its citizens without discrimination of any kind, Cuba has had to send a group of patients, with their escorts, for treatment in hospitals abroad at a cost of $1,066,600. Without the embargo, these technologies could have been imported from the United States and the patients could have been treated in their own country.
- In February 2017, the German company Otto Bock, a supplier of orthopaedic prostheses, said that, owing to the embargo, it could not provide the lower limb components requested by MediCuba. As a result of this refusal, another similar but lower-quality product had to be purchased. The modern prostheses from the company Otto Bock significantly enhance the chances that a person with an amputated lower limb will retain or recover mobility, which has a

significant impact on the quality of life of Cuban patients with lower limb amputations.

- On 17 March 2017, MediCuba received a communication from the supplier Lindmed Trade of Spain, which indicated that it could not supply the antibiotic Ciprofloxacin lactate in the form of a 200 mg injection because the manufacturer, Claris Otsuka, refused to sell the goods on the grounds that Cuba was subject to sanctions imposed by OFAC, and the company could not, therefore, directly or indirectly supply any product to Cuba. This broad-spectrum antibiotic, used intravenously in adult and paediatric patients hospitalized for the treatment of infections of the respiratory tract, skin, soft tissue, bones and joints caused by sensitive bacteria, cannot be used in Cuban hospitals.

- In April 2017, the German supplier Eckert and Ziegler Radiopharma refused to supply a Ge-68/Ga-68 Gallia Pharm generator with its components to MediCuba. This equipment is used in the diagnosis of prostate cancer. According to Eckert and Ziegler Radiopharma, the company could not supply the product to Cuba directly or via a third country because of the embargo.

- The Frank Pais international orthopaedic complex in Havana reported that it did not have access to equipment and supplies from the United States company Arthrex, the leader in the field of arthroscopic surgery. In February 2017, a request was made for the purchase of this equipment through MediCuba. Regrettably, to date no response has been received. The company's website clearly states that all its subsidiaries both in the United States and in other countries must apply for a special export licence to sell its products to certain countries, of which Cuba is one. The purchase and use of Arthrex equipment would mean higher-quality care for Cuban patients.

- The anatomical pathology department of the nationally renowned Hermanos Amejeiras surgical clinical hospital, which carries out highly complex diagnostics, needs a high-precision electron microscope to do its work. The hospital currently has a Hitachi microscope which cannot be repaired because more than 80 per cent of its components are from the United States. Hitachi managers were able to see this for themselves during their visit to the hospital in September 2016.

- The cardiology department of the aforementioned hospital requires a circulatory assist device such as the Impella system sold by the United States company Abiomed, the market leader. In February 2017, a request for Abiomed equipment was made through MediCuba but to date no response has been received. This equipment is widely used in cases of cardiogenic shock, interventional cardiology and electrophysiology to enable recovery from heart attacks and thus extend the life of the patient. The hospital currently uses only the intra-aortic balloon counterpulsation technique, which does not have the same advantages as the Impella system.

The restrictions imposed under the embargo on international financial transactions involving Cuba prevented a researcher from the Pedro Kouri Institute of Tropical Medicine from receiving payment for the publication of his scientific article in the *Journal of Parasitology Research*. The embargo has also affected academic and scientific exchanges between Cuban health professionals and technicians and their counterparts in the United States owing to delays in the granting of visas required to participate in events in the United States.[4]

In April 2016, improvement of the living conditions of the Cuban people, with an emphasis on food, among other key sectors, was reaffirmed as one of the nation's priorities and permanent objectives. To that end, the national plan for the economic and social development of Cuba up to 2030 identifies the need to develop non-sugar agribusiness as one of its strategic sectors, in particular to integrate industry into the primary agriculture sector and increase the added value of food products.

These actions are intended to sustain the gains achieved by Cuba in the area of food security, as recognized by the specialized agencies of the United Nations system.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States has impeded the development of the food sector in Cuba for more than 55 years. The losses to the food industry and agriculture during the period covered by this report amount to $347,598,000.

Cuban food companies have to import approximately 70 per cent of their basic raw materials from different markets, including Argentina, Brazil, Canada, the Dominican Republic, India, Italy, Mexico and Spain. To date, however, the embargo has made it impossible to make purchases on the United States market, which is very attractive from the point of view of prices and proximity, in addition to having varied supplies of raw materials, commodities and equipment needed to modernize production lines. Such purchases would also lead to a significant decrease in inventories which, for obvious reasons, need to be maintained, meaning that capital is tied up.

2.2. Right to education, sports and culture

Education is an inalienable life-long right for every Cuban. It is a fundamental objective of the Revolution enshrined in the Constitution and is an indisputable priority for the State. This was reflected in the budget adopted by the Cuban Government for 2017, in which education is allocated 23 per cent of budgetary expenditure, a sum equivalent to 9 per cent of gross domestic product at current prices. This ensures the functioning of 9,433 primary, lower secondary and higher secondary schools (with an estimated 1,771,800 students) and all university education, in which 145,770 students are enrolled. There are also 140,610 children in day-care centres.

The embargo imposed by the United States affects Cuban programmes intended to ensure high-quality, universal education that is free of charge at all levels. The education sector in Cuba has suffered losses of $2,832,830 during the period covered by this report. The losses mainly stemmed from higher freight costs for importing school supplies from third countries, given the impossibility of purchasing them in the United States.

Cuba imported from China 590 containers with the majority of teaching supplies for the current school year. Twenty-foot freight containers from China cost approximately $3,200, while 40-foot containers cost approximately $5,200 on average. The prices for the same containers from the United States are $1,300 and

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[4] The events which they were unable to attend were the Puerto Rican Conference on Public Health (2 to 5 May 2016), a workshop on child disability measurement in the Americas (New York, 17 to 20 October 2016), a Spanish-language endocrinology course (Miami, 7 to 10 December 2016), and the Scientific Sessions of the American Diabetes Association (New Orleans, 10 to 14 June 2016).

$2,000 respectively. Cuba has had to incur very high costs every year to be able to guarantee school supplies, solely as a result of freight charges.

In the case of higher education, the embargo has obstructed access to the technology and equipment necessary for teaching and scientific research, dissemination of and adequate remuneration for results, the purchase of supplies, tools and instruments, university outreach work and local development.

The following are some concrete examples observed between April 2016 and March 2017:

- Cuban and Puerto Rican universities have had exchanges for years. However, as a result of the embargo, students from Puerto Rico are prohibited from taking up internships in Cuban universities. The University of Pinar del Río, to mention just one case, conservatively estimates that approximately 150 students per year could take up internships at the university at an average cost of $200 a day. Therefore, because of the embargo, the university missed out on $30,000 that could otherwise have been used for its development.
- During the period under review, the José Antonio Echeverría technological university in Havana missed out on $28,000 from international workshops and/or internships in its faculties since it was unable to receive students from the United States.
- The Martha Abreu Central University in Las Villas reported a shortfall of $221,300 since it had to purchase equipment for three specialized electrical engineering, measurement and actuation laboratories on the Chinese market, whereas it could have been purchased on the United States market at half or one third of the price paid.
- The higher education sector would have saved $112,000 if it had been able to import 96 containers with materials for the country's universities from the port of Miami. However, because of the embargo, the goods had to be imported from European and Chinese ports. The 64 containers from China cost $102,400 and the 32 containers from Europe cost $131,200. If it had been possible to transport the containers from Miami, the cost per container would have been only $200.
- The embargo prevents Cuban universities from accessing modern professional software developed by companies in the United States, such as Architectural Desktop (AutoCAD), chemical process comparison simulators, statistical programmes for economics courses, design software, finite-element simulation software and digital computing software such as Solidworks, AutoCAD, Abaqus, MathCad and MATLAB. Without licences the software cannot be installed and subsequently put to use. The Google Code and SourceForge collaborative development platforms, which are the world's most important for developers and contain open source codes and lists of services, are blocked for Cuba.

Cuban sport has earned global recognition for making a mark on numerous events in all categories. This sector also faces serious restrictions on its development as a result of the embargo policy.

The main effects reported are occasioned by, among other factors, the unnecessary payment of freight charges for the transportation of products purchased on distant markets; the shortage or inadequacy of certain teaching and research means and resources; limited access to scientific information and the computer tools needed for educational multimedia production at different sports education levels; and obstacles to receiving payment for professional services provided abroad. If

Cuba could access the United States market for sports equipment, this could be imported at a price 20 to 25 per cent lower than the price actually paid.

Cuban archery and sailing athletes who trained to participate in the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in the summer of 2016, were unable to purchase the necessary first-class equipment as a result of the embargo policy:

- The relevant Easton brand archery equipment, the most technologically advanced in the sport, is made in the United States. The United States companies that sell it did not respond to purchase requests from the Cuban Archery Federation. Cuba had to seek a supplier of archery equipment in another country. It received only one offer, from a Spanish supplier that would have charged approximately $17,569, net of shipping from Europe, which made the purchase impossible. If it had been possible to purchase the equipment directly in the United States, the price would not have exceeded $12,480.
- Cuban sailing athletes faced a similar situation. The latest-generation boats made in the United States cost around $8,320. The embargo prevents Cuba from importing them. European offers were in the range of $18,350. The country was unable to pay those prices.

For some years, a Cuban baseball team has been participating as a guest in the Caribbean Series. The Cuban Baseball Federation has expressed its desire to become a permanent member, with full rights and obligations. Unfortunately, this wish has been frustrated by the refusal of the United States Government. This has even been confirmed by the President of the Caribbean Confederation of Professional Baseball, Juan Francisco Puello, who stated during the most recent series in February 2017 that the Cuban team's future participation would depend on the decision of the United States Government.

During the series, three Cuban athletes were selected for the Caribbean Series All-Star Team owing to their outstanding performance. The restrictions imposed under the embargo have prevented the Cuban athletes from receiving their cash prizes.

The Cuban revolutionary Government has prioritized the protection and development of the nation's tangible and intangible cultural heritage, along with efforts to disseminate and raise awareness of it, as key elements in the achievement of full social justice and the comprehensive development of society. Considerable resources have been allocated by the Cuban State to the development and dissemination of Cuban culture.

The application by the United States of its embargo policy against Cuba has affected bilateral exchange in the field of culture. In the period under consideration in this report alone, losses in the Cuban culture sector are estimated to be at least $35,314,000, an increase of 16 per cent compared with the same period the previous year.

The embargo is preventing the adequate promotion, dissemination and sale of Cuban artistic talent, reducing prices for Cuban cultural products and services to almost nothing and limiting the international public's enjoyment of Cuban music, through the control exerted by large art and music transnationals, mostly based in the United States.

In the case of music, live concerts by Cuban musicians in the United States have to be cultural exchanges, with no commercial contracts between the parties. Cuban enterprises do not make a profit, because acts cannot perform commercially in other markets during periods of exchange with the United States.

The sale and promotion of Cuban art has remained subject to United States Department of the Treasury provisions, despite the fact that the Berman Amendment allows for the legal purchase of Cuban art.

The damage caused in the field of culture in the period covered by the report includes the following:

- In the field of music, there were 46 cultural exchanges in the United States in the period evaluated in this report, with the participation of 308 musicians. Had there been economic contracts for these performances, conservative estimates show that the country could have earned around $673,300.
- Without the restrictions imposed by the embargo, it is estimated that Cuban groups could earn more than $3 million a year, given their quality and the popularity of Cuban music in the United States market. This calculation is based on the revenue of some of the major Latino groups performing Cuban music at concerts in the United States, with estimated average revenue of $100,000. If more than 10 of the main Cuban groups could perform commercially in the United States, even offering only three concerts a year, the figure would be higher.
- During this period, the company Empresa de Grabaciones y Ediciones Musicales (EGREM) was unable to enter into contracts with its counterparts Blue Night Entertainment, Magnus Media, My Latin Thing and Los Canarios Music for performances in the United States by the groups Buena Fe, Leoni Torres, Salsa Mambo, Cha Cha Chá and Septeto Santiaguero owing to the application of the embargo. As a result, the company lost revenues worth approximately $500,000.

As regards issues of musical copyright between Cuba and the United States, parties in the two countries remain unable to enter into reciprocal representation contracts. Respect for copyright and the payment of the corresponding royalties to rights-holders are recognized by the laws of most countries in the world. Copyright principles are set out in international conventions to which Cuba and the United States are States parties. The damage caused by the embargo in this area includes the following:

- The Cuban Musical Copyright Association was unable to sign a reciprocal representation contract with the American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers, despite the fact that the two institutions reached an agreement and understanding.
- Three members of the Cuban Musical Copyright Association could not complete an online course on copyright and collective management offered by the International Confederation of Societies of Authors and Composers. Before the end of the course, the registered Cuban representatives were notified by the Confederation that the course would be closed to them because Cuba is subject to United States Government sanctions. The website https://www.futurelearn.com/blocked-territories clearly displays this notification.

The Cuban Cultural Property Fund brings together a broad range of artists, artisans and designers. Around 8,000 creative professionals market their products through the Fund's network of shops and art galleries and the calendar of events that it organizes, such as craft fairs and fine arts exhibitions, in addition to producing commissioned works. Between April 2016 and March 2017, the value of the Fund's exports totalled $1,942,200. It was unable to export to the United States market.

Given the potential of Cuban artists, the aesthetic quality of their work and the natural market in the United States for fine and applied arts, the Fund believes exports to that market would total at least $12 million annually if the barriers imposed under the embargo did not exist. This analysis is based on the value of exports by the Dominican Republic and Mexico in 2016, involving products of a similar quality and almost the same production capacity as in Cuba.

The film industry in Cuba is also hit hard by the conditions imposed under the embargo. Examples of the damage are given below:

- The cinematographic art sector reports that, as a result of the embargo, it cannot use the technology developed by the prestigious United States company Dolby, a distributor of cinema sound technology. Soundtrack processes in film production worldwide are obliged to use the technology provided by the company because access to the international market is almost impossible without Dolby sound. This forces Cuba to enter into unnecessary partnerships with foreign producers in order to acquire the relevant licences, and to grant those producers a share of the potential Cuban market.
- Animation studios do not have access to the software licences necessary for their production processes. The only possible alternative, as in the previous case, is partnering with foreign producers, which implies sharing the revenue generated by their productions.

2.3. The right to development

Despite exchanges with United States business and scientific delegations, and the realization of some collaborative projects, the biotechnology sector in Cuba continues to be affected by the United States embargo.

The sector has proven its ability to develop innovative and technologically advanced products, medicines, equipment and services, with a view to improving the health of the Cuban people, producing exportable goods and services, and developing advanced food-production technology. The embargo prevents United States citizens from benefiting directly from biotechnology and pharmaceutical products developed in Cuba unless they violate their country's laws.

The total losses resulting from the application of the embargo policy during the period covered in this report amount to $322,993,600. Some concrete examples of the damage are as follows:

- The company Laboratorios MedSol is the largest supplier of the generic drugs in the Cuban basic schedule of drugs, particularly in the pharmaceutical form of tablets. This requires such supplies as polyvinyl chloride[6] packaging. Through an intermediary, a contract was signed to buy the packaging from the German company Klöckner Pentaplast. The German company informed the intermediary that, since it would be listed on the United States stock market from 2017, it had been instructed not to carry out any direct or indirect transactions with Cuba.
- The Natural Products Centre, part of the National Centre for Scientific Research, has been unable to purchase spare parts for two Agilent chromatographs, because the United States companies that export them do not sell to Cuba owing to the embargo. These machines are essential for quality control of the products that the Centre's pharmaceutical chemistry department researches and develops. Because these two chromatographs have been out of service, staff

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[6] Polyvinyl chloride (PVC) is the most versatile derivative of plastic, widely used in industry owing to its malleability and strength, dimensional stability and environmental resilience. Moreover, it is recyclable using a range of methods.

have had to overuse the rest of the equipment in the laboratory, resulting in losses of $6 million.

- The Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology has faced difficulties in acquiring inputs and products used in that field with approximately 20 suppliers, including such recognized manufacturers as Agilent, Bio-Rad, Abcam and PanReac, which withdrew their supplies to intermediaries when they discovered that the commercial transaction was intended for Cuba, resulting in a loss of more than $368,000.
- The products the Centre has not been able to obtain because of the embargo include a United States-made auxiliary pump, requested from the German company Sartorius. This pump is necessary for the operation of three other pieces of production equipment. As a result, they are currently offline, which has affected the production of this important Centre and has caused losses of $326,000.
- The company Empresa de Servicios Ingenieros Especializados has a division responsible for the calibration of equipment used in industry, which is vital for its proper operation. This work currently has to be carried out through third countries and with wait times of more than five months because the services of the United States market cannot be used. This situation has resulted in losses amounting to $21,784.32.

The tourism industry in Cuba has also reported substantial damage as a result of the embargo. In the reporting period, losses caused by the policy amounted to $1,701,960,000.

Estimates based on data published by the Caribbean Tourism Organization indicate that the number of visitors to the region grew by 4.2 per cent compared with 2015, with United States nationals accounting for nearly 50 per cent of this figure. This amounts to 14.6 million Americans who chose to spend their holidays in our region, spending an average of about $1,000. There are studies showing that, on average, 1.5 million Americans who chose the Caribbean as a tourist destination could have travelled to Cuba if it were not for the regulations imposed by the United States Government.

As a result, the Cuban tourism industry lost around $1.5 billion, taking into account the potential number of United States tourists and the average expenditure per visit mentioned above.

In the United States, about 73 million people a year engage in nautical activities and have about 17.7 million vessels of different sizes. Many of these sail very close to Cuban shores in the direction of the Caribbean. However, the embargo prohibits them from accessing the facilities in Cuban marinas. Cuba is an attractive venue for yachting and nautical tourism in general, given the geographical characteristics and location of the island.

The company Empresa de Marinas y Náuticas Marlin currently has some 700 berths that could receive approximately 191,600 boats a day per year, at only 75 per cent occupancy. With an average stay of seven days, 27,400 vessels could tie up in Cuba in a year, which would mean an income of $6.2 million for the country from berthing fees alone. Adding other services such as drinking water and electricity, dockage, commissary, fuel, shops, and yacht and other repairs, income could increase to about $15 million.

In the communications and informatics sector, including telecommunications, the losses suffered during the period covered by this report amount to $68,922,100. This is $9,713,000 more than in the same period the previous year.

The restoration of relations between Cuba and the United States led to the conclusion of direct interconnection agreements with four United States companies in the telecommunications sector. However, it has not been possible to consolidate them so that they can play a significant role in international telecommunications services because of the continuing financial and commercial risks resulting from the United States embargo. The main damage in this sector is as follows:

- The impossibility of establishing direct banking relations between Cuban and United States financial institutions.
- The impossibility of accessing the United States market to purchase the necessary technological equipment. As a result, Cuba must turn to more distant markets, including Asia, with correspondingly higher shipping costs.
- The impossibility of accessing high-performance brands and leading-edge telecommunications equipment that are distributed by or under patent of United States companies, including fixed telephones, mobile telephones, antennas and computer systems, even for purchase from subsidiaries in third countries.
- Risks of heavy fines for manufacturing and trading companies where more than 10 per cent of the technology comes from the United States.

Over the past three years the situation in Cuba has been very tense as a result of a prolonged drought. By the end of February 2017, 71 per cent of the national territory was suffering from meteorological drought, 33 per cent of which was classified as moderate or extreme. It is estimated that 694,000 people were partially affected and 58,700 fully affected. According to climate specialists, this is a trend that will not be reversed in the short term, hence the steps that the Cuban Government has been taking to achieve rational use of water.

This situation is exacerbated by the United States embargo, which affects the development of the country's water infrastructure. The policy has resulted in losses in this sector in the order of $2,358,817.

For its rehabilitation programme for drinking water networks and water mains for the country's largest cities, Cuba cannot obtain the state-of-the-art technology available on the United States market. As a result, the country has to spend more money to import supplies from third countries. The importing company Cubahidraulica estimates that, if it were not for the embargo, it could import from the United States around 152 containers of hydraulic material that it currently imports from the rest of the world. In Europe, these containers cost approximately $307,390. However, if they were imported from the United States, the amount would be only $136,093. Therefore, the country has had to spend about an additional $171,297.

Changing the energy mix and making greater use of renewable sources of energy is one of the Cuban State's main goals. One aim of the national social and economic development plan to 2030 is to see renewable sources of energy reach a 24 per cent share of electricity production; the figure currently stands at just over 4 per cent. However, the energy and mining sector in Cuba is one of the worst affected by the implementation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo. During the period under review in the present report, the implementation of this policy has resulted in losses for this sector of $122,584,708. This figure represents an increase over the previous year of $16,232,147.

Some examples are set out below:

- The company Comandante Ernesto "Che" Guevara was unable to export approximately 3,500 tons of nickel sulfide produced between April and December 2016 because, owing to the extraterritorial application of the United States embargo, it was difficult to find a banking institution prepared to open a letter of credit abroad. This meant that the Cuban economy lost $23,600,000 in revenue.

- The joint venture Moa Nickel is prohibited from importing from the United States the sulfur it needs for production purposes. As a result, it has to source the required amount in the Middle East to ensure nickel production in the country, which increases the cost of importing the sulfur by about 25 per cent. Consequently, the cost to the Cuban economy was about $1 million dollars.
- The business group Energoimport had to pay an additional $4,036,967 to effect repairs to the Matanzas thermal power station, scheduled for 2016. In December 2015, through licence CU-2015-321998-1, OFAC authorized the company General Electric and its subsidiaries to engage in all operations necessary for the maintenance of the power station. However, General Electric refused to perform the required work because it had no guarantee that OFAC would not fine it for carrying out operations in Cuba. As a result, the power station had to contract the repair services and the purchase of spare parts from another company, which led to increased maintenance costs.

For Cuba, the comprehensive development of the branches of industry that contribute to the promotion of the strategic sectors included in the national economic and social development plan to 2030 is a priority. These sectors are also affected by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States. During the period covered by the present report, Cuban industry suffered financial losses in the order of $59,225,936.

The Cuban company Quimimpex, which specializes in importing products for the development of the chemical industry in Cuba, was once again unable to purchase the necessary raw materials, spare parts and equipment on the United States market. The companies contacted indicated that the laws imposed by the United States Government against Cuba remained in place. Therefore, Cuba paid 20 per cent more for those products owing to the cost of importing them from third countries.

The company had to pay an additional cost of over $111 per metric ton to buy 98 per cent liquid chlorine. The provider contracted by Cuba came under considerable pressure from OFAC when it learned that the imports were for Cuba. The product was going to come directly from Colombia to Cuba but had to be routed through Panama. It was not possible to acquire spare and replacement parts for Burton Corblin or Garo equipment owing to the presence of United States shareholders among the providers. This situation put Cuban chlorine production at high risk.

The distribution company BK-Import-Export, responsible for ensuring production and wide-ranging projects in the metal-mechanical industry, was unable to import the supplies necessary for its operations from the United States. As a result, it had to spend an additional $5,024,643 owing to the higher cost of shipping its imports from China. Cuban industry would have been able to acquire some of the following equipment with the amount unnecessarily spent:

- 2,563 electric motors (power range 0.12 kW-28 kW)
- 13,928 LPC47 90-litre solar heater kits
- 412 carbon dioxide welding machines
- 138 air compressors
- 146 alternating current variable speed drives.

For the same reason, the Grupo Empresarial de la Industria Sidero-Mecánica steel industry group faced losses in the order of $50,173,625, equivalent to 10 per cent of all its operations. Without such costs, it would have been able to acquire some of the following supplies:

- 19,505 tons of galvanized steel coils for the roofs of houses, shops and industrial centres
- 1,225 tons of pipes and panels for the manufacture and repair of clinical furniture
- 3,193 tons of sundry metals for the manufacture of irrigation machines and systems
- 3,171 tons of sundry laminates for the repair and manufacture of sugar cane trailers
- 10 complete knock-down kits for the manufacture of sugar cane harvesters
- 2,130 tons of steel bars and springs for the manufacture and repair of hydraulic cylinders for sugar cane harvesting equipment
- 878 tons of steel sheets for the production of agricultural equipment
- 1,820 solar heaters for hospitals, hotels and production facilities
- 20 paper and cardboard balers
- 173 lifts for various uses in hospitals, hotels and residential buildings.

The total losses suffered by Cuban industry because of the embargo are equivalent to the investment that would be needed to install, in the Ernesto "Che" Guevara electronics company in Pinar del Rio, a new production line for photovoltaic solar panels with generation capacity for a 50-MW plant, and to import other equipment needed for the company.

In the construction sector, losses totalled $12,406,700. The main reason for the losses was the lack of access to more efficient construction technology, which is available on the United States market or is produced by subsidiaries of companies based there. Cuban companies such as Imeco, Construimport and Unión de Empresas Constructoras Caribe were therefore forced to import products from distant markets such as Asia and Europe, which led to increased import costs and losses owing to shipping and insurance costs.

In the period covered in the report, the transport sector suffered estimated losses of $122,397,000 as a result of the embargo policy. These losses have had a negative impact on all entities in the sector, the worst affected being Empresa Cubana de Aeropuertos y Servicios (the Cuban airports and services company) and the national airline Cubana de Aviación. The losses to the latter are calculated at $49,113,000 and $21,617,000 respectively.

III. Impact on the external sector of the Cuban economy

3.1. Foreign trade and foreign investment

The total loss caused by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States in the area of foreign trade in Cuba in the period addressed by this report is calculated to be $3,524,993,996.32. As in previous years, the indicator that demonstrates the impact most clearly is income not earned for the export of goods and services, which accounts for 83.6 per cent of all losses. In this period, there was also a 42 per cent increase in the cost of financing owing to country risk.

The following are examples of the policy's negative impact on the Cuban economy:

The Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology has developed the product Heberprot-P, a novel and unique drug for the treatment of advanced diabetic foot ulcer. To date, the treatment has benefited more than 230,000 patients worldwide. It has been registered in 21 countries and is protected by more than 30 patents.

Statistics indicate that the prevalence of diabetes in the United States is 9.3 per cent,[6] equivalent to approximately 29.2 million people. According to United States sources, 3.5 per cent[7] of them develop diabetic foot ulcer, amounting to more than 1 million people each year. Of these, 204,296 may develop advanced diabetic foot ulcer.

If Heberprot-P alone were exported to benefit the 5 per cent of Americans who develop advanced diabetic foot ulcer annually, the biotechnology industry of Cuba could earn over $122 million per year. This would also help to reduce the significant number of more than 70,000 amputations performed annually in the United States on diabetic patients.[8]

The Centre for Genetic Engineering and Biotechnology has introduced the Gavac vaccine onto the market as an alternative for tick control. It is specifically designed to target various species of the Rhipicephalus genus.

In the state of Tamaulipas, Mexico, bordering United States territory, where these ticks are endemic, a study was conducted that demonstrated that the vaccine was 99 per cent effective. In 2012, the vaccine was evaluated by the laboratory of the tick research centre within the Agricultural Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture and was found to be 99.9 per cent effective for the control of ticks.

The United States imports approximately 1 million head of cattle annually from the aforementioned region of Mexico. Using Gavac, a fully ecological vaccine, would reduce the risks of contamination on both sides of the border and the occurrence of tick-borne diseases. If there were no embargo, Cuba could provide this product to the United States, in particular to the livestock-farming territories of Texas and California. This would result in earnings of $2,250,000 for Cuba and improvements in this sector where the damage caused by these ticks is estimated at approximately $100 million annually.[9]

- The Placental Histotherapy Centre sees few possibilities for United States citizens to access Cuban products such as Melagenina Plus,[10] Coriodermina and anti-hair loss lotion, which are effective in the treatment of vitiligo, psoriasis and alopecia. The prevalence of the first two diseases in the United States is 1 per cent[11] and 3.15 per cent[12] respectively, while alopecia areata is the cause of 2.4 million doctor visits in the country each year. An increase in the number of patients visiting the Centre would significantly increase its income from medical consultations and the sale of medicines and cosmetics.

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[6] United States *National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2014*.

[7] Wound Healing Society, "Advances in wound care offer hope to millions of Americans", available at http://www.prnewswire.co.uk/news-releases/advances-in-wound-care-offer-hope-to-millions-of-americans-156809545.html.

[8] United States *National Diabetes Statistics Report, 2014*.

[9] Robert Miller et al., "Exploring the use of an anti-tick vaccine as a tool for the integrated eradication of the cattle fever tick, rhipicephalus (boophilus) annulatus", *Vaccine*, vol. 30 (2012), pp. 5682-5687.

[10] This drug is protected by a patent in the United States.

[11] A.B. Lerner and J.J. Nordlund, "Vitiligo: What is it? Is it important?", *Journal of the American Medical Association*, vol. 239 (1978), pp. 1183-1187.

[12] Vinod Chandran and Siba P. Raychaudhuri, "Geoepidemiology and environmental factors of psoriasis and psoriatic arthritis", *Journal of Autoimmunity*, vol. 34 (2010), pp. J314-J321.

- The Centre for Molecular Immunology has developed a vaccine, Cimavax-EGF, which during clinical trials had a positive effect in the treatment of advanced non-small-cell lung cancer, showing itself to be safe and well tolerated.

According to the United States National Cancer Institute, the estimated number of patients diagnosed with lung cancer in 2016 was 224,390, of whom at least 90 per cent would like to access this treatment, given the promising nature of the drug. A maximum market penetration of only 2.6 per cent[13] in the initial phase would mean revenue of $155 million for Cuba.

The National Cancer Institute study has confirmed also that the annual cost per cancer patient varies between $70,000 and $150,000 in the United States. However, according to specialists at the Centre for Molecular Immunology, a conservative estimate of the cost of the product developed by the Centre is $50,000.[14]

The Cimavax-EGF vaccine was patented in the United States in 2014. It was only at the end of 2016 that clinical trials were authorized there. If the embargo did not exist, clinical trials would have advanced and it would have been possible to sell the treatment on the United States market long ago, contributing to the quality of life of many Americans who suffer from this serious disease.

The number of containers operated by the Mediterranean Shipping Company which can be used for the export and import of goods to and from Cuba has been limited in a discriminatory manner by commercial rule BR259. In February 2017, the legal department at the headquarters of the Mediterranean Shipping Company approved a ban on using large numbers of containers belonging to this United States company or its subsidiaries. To that end, the company has prepared a list of the only containers authorized for trade with Cuba, which directly affects shipping times for products to and from Cuba.

Comercializadora de Servicios Médicos Cubanos offers foreigners different forms of care and academic services in Cuba. Since the restoration of bilateral relations with the United States, there has been an increase in the number of visitors covered by the 12 categories of licence. However, there remain restrictions on freedom of movement that directly affect United States citizens who wish to study or receive medical care in Cuba. In the period under consideration, the corresponding economic losses to the sector were estimated at $35,120,000.

Between April 2016 and March 2017, the agricultural sector in Cuba recorded losses in the order of $228,680,000 because the country was unable to export goods and services to the United States market. These multi-million-dollar resources could have been used to develop this important sector in Cuba. Following are a few examples:

- The company Citricos Caribe, part of the Grupo Empresarial Agricola de Cuba agricultural business group, has developed a pineapple cultivar that enjoys great international prestige and whose quality has been certified in the form of prizes awarded at renowned international fairs. The United States is the main consumer of pineapple in the world. According to Cuban estimates, some 125.1 tons of this crop could be exported annually to the United States, which could represent an income for the country of approximately $81,940.

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[13] Racotumomab, Nimotuzumab o Docetaxel para el tratamiento de cancer de pulmón de celulas no pequeñas avanzado (Racotumomab, Nimotuzumab or Docetaxel for the treatment of advanced non-small-cell lung cancer). http://registroclinico.sld.cu/ensayos/RPCFC00000179-Sp.

[14] Ryan Million, "Drug Pricing: Oncology in the United States", Trinity Partners.

- Premium cigars made in Cuba enjoy great international prestige and demand, and account for 70 per cent of volume and 80 per cent of sales in the markets to which they have access. Sales on the United States premium tobacco market amount to around 250 million units a year. The embargo bans sales of Cuban tobacco in that important market. It is estimated that, if these restrictions were lifted, in the first years Cuba could sell around 50 million units, which, if sold at $2.35 each, would allow the country to earn revenues of approximately $117,500,000.

3.2. Finance

In March 2016, the then President of the United States, Barack Obama, authorized the use of the United States dollar in commercial transactions between Cuba and other countries. He authorized United States banking institutions to open offices on the island and to provide other services, such as opening and maintaining accounts in the United States for Cuban citizens. At the time of preparation of this report, those measures have not been implemented effectively.

More than one year after the announcement of the measures, the Cuban banking system remains a direct target of the embargo, and interference with its financial assets abroad continues. It has not been possible to normalize banking relationships with United States entities. Difficulties remain in the normal use of the United States dollar in Cuban commercial and financial transactions, mainly owing to the ambiguities in the regulations in force and the fears of banks and commercial entities deriving from the fact they are the constant targets of fines and penalties. The few transactions in dollars carried out in the period under consideration are subject to prior monitoring and coordination that are highly unusual in comparison with international banking practice.

Only one licensed United States institution has directly carried out transactions with Cuba. There is no reciprocity whatsoever for Cuban financial institutions in this context, which limits and hinders the proper management of external resources by Cuban banks in their business relations with the United States.

In Cuba, the use of credit and debit cards issued by United States banks has so far been allowed by only three institutions, despite this having been one of the first changes set out in the regulations issued after 17 December 2014.

It is not enough to announce authorization of the use of the United States dollar in international trade; there must be a legal basis or public statement that provides the banks of third countries with guarantees that they will not face penalties for engaging in transactions with Cuban banks.

The extraterritorial nature of the embargo policy is reflected in the financial persecution of the banks of third countries and in the imposition of new fines on institutions for violating United States Government regulations with regard to Cuba. This has prompted many banking institutions to close Cuban accounts and to take measures that hinder and complicate the normal functioning of the banking system on the island.

During the period under consideration, although commercial transactions were entered into, it was clear that it was impossible to gain access to sources of financing both from United States banks and through other commercial channels, which is common practice in world trade.

Between April 2016 and March 2017, Cuba suffered damage as a result of the embargo policy, particularly because of its extraterritorial nature, involving more than 100 foreign banks. Examples include:

- The closing of Cuban bank accounts by four banks, two in Europe and two in Latin America.
- The cancellation of relationship management application (RMA) keys for SWIFT services by 14 entities, of which 11 were European, 2 were Latin American and 1 was in Oceania.
- The withholding of funds by five banks, of which three were European, one was North American and one was Asian.
- The refusal to provide banking services by 19 entities, of which 11 were European, 3 were Latin American, 3 were Asian and 2 were North American.
- The refusal to process or advise beneficiaries of letters of credit to 36 institutions, of which 6 were European and 30 were Asian.
- The return of banking transactions by 27 entities, of which 15 were European, 4 were Latin American and 8 were Asian.
- The cancellation of banking transactions and agreements signed with two European banks.

It is important to note that, in addition to the examples referred to in the previous report, in this period a further 40 banks gave in to the policy of harassment imposed under the United States embargo, which undermines the normal functioning and operations of Cuban banking institutions.

The following are some examples:

- In May 2016, the written confirmation by the Director of the British bank The Co-operative Bank (Co-op Bank) of the November 2015 decision to close the United Kingdom bank accounts of the Cuba Solidarity Campaign was made public. The decision was taken owing to the risk of being fined by OFAC.
- The United States embargo prevented the Spanish bank Santander from offering services to Cuban diplomatic missions in Spain, blocking the provision of point-of-sale terminals to the Consulates General of Cuba in Barcelona, Seville and Santiago de Compostela. Those prohibitions came a few months after the United States Department of the Treasury and Department of Commerce announced that they would allow their banks to process the transactions of Cuban banks.
- In January 2017, the United States Department of the Treasury imposed a $955,750 fine on the Canadian bank Toronto-Dominion for violating the Cuban embargo regulations. According to OFAC, the Canadian bank conducted transactions through the United States financial system for a Canadian company owned by a Cuban company, including the financing of commercial activities prohibited by the embargo.
- In February 2017, the Dominica subsidiary of the Canadian bank Scotiabank refused to allow the Cuban embassy in Dominica to make its regular deposit of East Caribbean dollars into its account at the bank. The bank argued that the deposit could not be made as the dollars came from an exchange operation in United States dollars; in accordance with OFAC laws, the bank would be subject to United States Government penalties.
- In March 2017, the private Nicaraguan bank Banco Corporativo refused to allow the Cubana de Aviación office based in Nicaragua to open an account. The bank's management explained that it was unable to perform the operation because Cubana de Aviación appears on the list of countries, organizations or persons with whom they should not do business or carry out transactions in

order to avoid being fined (the Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List, published by OFAC).

- In March 2017, the Cuban embassy in Kuwait reported that the letter of credit for a contract with German firm Unicor, approved for Cubahidráulica by the Kuwait Fund for Arab Economic Development, had not been accepted by the National Bank of Kuwait. The bank argued that the financial instrument could not be accepted because Cuba was subject to international sanctions.
- The Belgian bank ING stopped a transfer between Ghent University and the National Centre for Agricultural Sciences that was for the import of a vehicle for the VLIR project (a collaborative project of the Flemish Inter-university Council), stating that the bank could not conduct direct transactions with Cuba. This made it impossible for the Cuban bank Banco Financiero Internacional to deposit the amount for the purchase, $37,150.
- Since 2015, the Union Bank of Switzerland (UBS) has rejected all deposits by Cuban institutions to cover the Cuban contributions to the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the UNEP Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean and the bodies overseeing the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions. This situation has prevented the country from paying its dues to the entities concerned on time. As a result, since 2016 Cuba has not been eligible for projects and/or technical cooperation activities under the Basel, Rotterdam and Stockholm Conventions linked to the safe management of chemicals and hazardous waste.
- A European bank refused to process the transactions of a Cuban company through a Cuban bank, arguing that the company is included in the OFAC Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List.
- A Cuban bank reported that the office of the Pan American Health Organization in Cuba had not been able to transfer funds to its account in a bank in a third country, even though it had an OFAC general licence authorizing such transactions. This attests to the extraterritorial nature of the financial embargo.

The Cuban biopharmaceutical industry has not escaped the financial persecution caused by the embargo, with total losses amounting to $20,425,100. Examples include the difficulties faced by the import and export company FARMACUBA in finalizing negotiations with the Korean company Sejong Pharmatech to import a tablet-coating drum, of great importance for the pharmaceutical industry. Owing to the restrictions imposed under the embargo, the transaction had to be re-routed through a European intermediary bank to purchase the equipment, which resulted in an additional cost of $250,000.

- The Centre for Molecular Immunology reports that the Malaysian company Inno Biologics has outstanding payments amounting to $150,000 because the company has been unable to transfer funds to Cuba owing to the embargo. Several banks, such as Maybank and Public Bank, have been approached to open bank accounts that would enable the transfers to Cuba, but to no avail.
- The Centre's joint venture in Singapore, Innocimab, also faces the same problem, with outstanding payments amounting to $1,225,000. Attempts have been made to find alternative ways for it to fulfil its commitments, but the embargo laws have made this impossible.

Empresa de Seguros Internacionales de Cuba (international insurance company of Cuba) has reported that in the period addressed by this report, it has seen a tightening of the embargo policy in the purchase of reinsurance protections for Cuban insurance portfolios. Some examples of the damage are given below:

- Empresa de Seguros Internacionales de Cuba does not have access to the full range of reinsurance capacity at the global level. As a result, its negotiating position is weakened. Restrictions have grown tighter owing to a lack of access to the financial institutions that participate in the reinsurance process. This complicates reinsurance collections and payments, and the situation is exacerbated by the impossibility of making collections and payments from and to other countries in United States dollars, despite the announcement of the lifting of these restrictions by United States President Barack Obama.
- Cuban insurance companies cannot purchase reinsurance protection from United States companies. Indeed, it would make no sense for them to do business with these companies, even if they did agree to do so, because when the time came to pay for losses, they would freeze or block the funds. This applies equally to companies in third countries in which United States citizens have interests, something which has become more common in recent years owing to mergers and acquisitions in the global economy and particularly in the insurance and financial services sector.

The legal services sector in Cuba has not been spared the damage caused by the embargo. It has suffered losses of $158,416 associated with exchange rate variations, the use of intermediaries to collect payments for the services of third parties and the impossibility of recovering payment in some cases, as seen in the following example:

- The firm Consultores Legales y Agentes de Invenciones y Marcas, which works in the area of industrial property, was affected by financial expenses caused by exchange rate variations in financial and foreign trade transactions, owing to its lack of access to the United States dollar. Of total sales from exports of services amounting to $2,642,404 during the period under review, it incurred losses owing to financial expenses of $106,986, of which $95,669 was associated with exchange rate variations and online payment costs arising from the use of alternative websites for those clients using Mastercard or Visa credit cards, which are prohibited in Cuba by the United States.

IV. The embargo violates international law. Extraterritorial application

4.1. Damage to Cuban entities

As demonstrated in the previous chapters, in the period covered by this report, the United States continued its implementation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. This policy has a significant extraterritorial component, as set out below:

- The insurance company XChanging, which processes the collection and payment of premiums and claims for Lloyd's and the London market, has withdrawn from transactions with Cuba. The company entered into negotiations to be acquired by a company in the United States. To continue operations with Cuba, the new owner has to apply for a licence from OFAC to be able to process the transactions of businesses involved in insurance and reinsurance. There is no guarantee that the licence will be granted and, even if the Office decides to grant it, the application process will take several months. As a result, XChanging has announced the termination of all processing of Cuban transactions with immediate effect.
- On 2 June 2016, it was learned that the Chinese company Huawei had received a summons from the United States Department of Commerce to report on

exports and re-exports of United States technology to Cuba and other countries under sanctions in the last five years. Those investigations took place throughout 2016 and more recently in April 2017, when the Department of the Treasury decided to carry out a more comprehensive review of the company's business with countries subject to United States sanctions, including Cuba.

- On 9 September 2016, the Netherlands bank Rabobank cancelled the financial services relating to Cuba it had provided to Vereenigde Octrooibureaux, owing to the embargo regulations. Vereenigde Octrooibureaux is responsible for renewing the patents held by the Cuban business group BioCubaFarma, and the group will not be able to pay Vereenigde Octrooibureaux to maintain the patents in Europe of a significant number of scientific inventions associated with biopharmaceuticals.

- On 27 September 2016, it was reported that between July and September 2016, six banks based in Pakistan had refused to open a letter of credit for Cuba. The Pakistani biotechnology company Macter International had requested the letter from the Cuban company Heber Biotec for the purchase of 100,000 hepatitis B vaccines. The reason for the refusal was that Cuba was on the list of countries subject to sanctions imposed by OFAC.

- On 7 October 2016, it was reported that Swiss bank UBS had refused to accept a transfer of 20,000 Swiss francs from Cuba, to pay the annual contribution of the National Assembly of People's Power of Cuba to the Inter-Parliamentary Union, based in Geneva.

- On 31 October 2016, the Belgian bank Fintro, an affiliate of BNP Paribas Fortis, refused to carry out a transfer from a Belgian citizen to a Cuban victim of the effects of Hurricane Matthew. OFAC fined BNP Paribas $8.97 billion in 2014 for violating the sanctions against Cuba, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Myanmar and the Sudan.

Other BNP Paribas subsidiaries refused to carry out a transfer of $9,310 from a Belgian citizen to the Cuban company Ecotur because of the embargo. The bank also refused to finance an advertising campaign by the Belgian communications agency ECL-TMS, because the end client for the campaign was Cuba and the bank cannot engage in any kind of activity relating to the island owing to the OFAC sanctions.

- On 23 December 2016, the Malaysian subsidiary of the Japanese company Tokio Marine Insurance refused to renew the vehicle insurance contract of the Cuban diplomatic mission in Malaysia, as Cuba is a country under United States sanctions.

- On 10 April 2017, the Canadian subsidiary of United States company Expedia broke off negotiations with the travel agency Hola Sun, the representative of the company Havanatur in Canada, aimed at implementing an agreement for the sale of tickets for travel to Cuba. Expedia claimed that the inclusion of Hola Sun in the OFAC Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List prevented finalization of the agreement.

4.2. Impact on international cooperation

- The Central Medical Cooperation Unit of Cuba reported that, in the period covered in this report, it experienced problems with financial banks in Djibouti and Uganda related to the processing of transfers to pay for the medical services that Cuba provides to those countries. The African banks have correspondent banks in the United States and therefore argue that owing to the embargo regulations there is a high probability that those transfers would be blocked before reaching their destination.

- On 19 December 2016, a Royal Bank of Canada subsidiary in the Bahamas refused to carry out a transfer for four Cuban medical workers in the Bahamas to a Scotiabank account (also in the Bahamas) because of the restrictions imposed under the United States embargo against Cuba.

- In March 2017, the Cuban embassy in Italy reported that the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations had faced difficulties related to the purchase of computers for a food security project that includes Google Earth technologies, solely because they are linked to Cuba and have Cuba as their final destination.

- On 15 March 2017, it was reported that the Antigua and Barbuda subsidiary of the Canadian bank Scotiabank had refused to exchange local currency for United States dollars, and vice versa, for Cubans working in Antigua and Barbuda or to allow them to withdraw money in Cuba using Scotiabank debit cards. At the same time, the bank refused to open personal accounts or issue debit cards for staff at the Cuban embassy. The alleged reason was that Cuba is subject to sanctions, and transactions must pass through United States banks.

4.3. Other extraterritorial impacts

- On 11 July 2016, the United States bank Citibank cancelled the transfer of payments for Havanatur services to the Colombian airline Avianca, and the Spanish bank Santander cancelled transfers to the Cuban company Puro Tabaco, the exclusive distributor of Corporación Habanos for Argentina, Uruguay and Chile. Both used OFAC sanctions as a pretext for the cancellations.

- The United States company PayPal withheld a payment by a United States citizen because the accompanying message included the word Cuba, which could constitute a violation of OFAC regulations. In addition, it froze the account of a client who paid a friend for a Cuban cigar bought in Mexico, on the grounds that the client was promoting transactions in goods prohibited by the United States Government.

The same company cancelled the payments of over 100 clients who attempted to buy tickets for the premiere in European cinemas of the documentary *Havana Moon — The Rolling Stones Live in Cuba*, on the grounds that the description of the transaction included the words "Havana" or "Cuba", which constituted a violation of OFAC regulations.

- On 2 September 2016, the British bank Standard Chartered cancelled an account in United States dollars held by the Ambassador of the Gambia in Cuba because the country is subject to sanctions under United States law.

- On 7 September 2016, the Netherlands electronic payments company PayU shut down operations with all clients connected with Cuba and cited OFAC regulations as grounds for its decision. Later, the company cancelled payment gateway services for the agency Havanatur Argentina owing to OFAC regulations and the constant pressure it was under as a result of its relations with Cuba.

- On 12 September 2016, Commerzbank and Unicredit Banca Di Roma refused to accept two payments from a Cuban Ministry of Tourism account held with Banco Financiero Internacional intended for the Italian firm Kekoa Publishing and the German company Air Berlin because the transaction originated in

Cuba. The transactions were conducted in euros and were associated with Cuban tourism advertising in the countries concerned.

- On 6 October 2016, National Commercial Bank Jamaica terminated transfers to Cuba from the Jamaican company Caribbean Cable and the Kingston office of Aerogaviota, owing to a decision taken by its intermediary bank in Canada.
- The European company Eurosports cancelled its agreement with the Canadian company Brandworks for the broadcast of the Ministry of Tourism advertising campaign entitled "Authentic Cuba", because Eurosports was bought by a subsidiary of the United States company Discovery Channel and its legal department decided that the company could not proceed with the agreement owing to OFAC regulations on Cuba.
- On 26 October 2016, the Miami office of the International Air Transport Association (IATA) rejected the membership application of Havanatur Argentina, since it is on the OFAC Specially Designated Nationals and Blocked Persons List.
- On 30 January 2017, the Mexican subsidiary of the Spanish bank Santander cancelled two accounts held by Cubana de Aviación in Mexico for reasons related to the United States embargo against Cuba. One of the accounts was in Mexican pesos and the other in United States dollars.
- In February 2017, the Argentine bank Credicoop rejected several cheques deposited by Havanatur Argentina in the account of the airline Avianca, as a result of the embargo.
- On 10 February 2017, it was reported that the bank BNP Paribas had refused to accept transfers from IATA to Cubana de Aviación-Paris, owing to OFAC regulations.
- British citizens may not travel to Cuba from the United States carrying only the tourist cards issued by the Cuban consulate in the United Kingdom. The United States Government requires them to buy visas from United States airlines at higher prices than if the journey was made directly from their country of origin. In addition, British citizens are obliged to fill in the affidavit referring to the 12 categories of travel authorized under the OFAC general licence, which should apply only to citizens of the United States.
- The staff of the Permanent Mission of Cuba to the United Nations in New York have been prevented from shopping in a branch of the wholesale company Costco, because there is a company directive that prohibits serving Cuban nationals with links to the country's diplomatic missions. The directive, in addition, instructs Costco staff to cancel the membership of such persons. The company renewed this directive even after President Obama removed Cuba from the list of State sponsors of international terrorism.
- On 2 June 2017, it was reported that the online learning platform Future Learn, belonging to the British public institution the Open University, had blocked the participation of several members of the Cuban Society of Anaesthesiology and Resuscitation because Cuba is on the list of countries subject to United States sanctions.
- On 7 June 2017, the Ecuadorian bank Produbanco cancelled financial transactions related to Cuba owing to the acquisition of new interests in the United States by the Promérica Group (to which Produbanco belongs).
- On 9 June 2017, the financial operations branch of the electronic trading company Pago Fácil in Argentina cancelled a contract and transactions linked

to Havanatur Argentina. The suspension of transactions is in response to an instruction from Western Union, the parent company of Pago Fácil, citing the existence of an economic sanctions regime against Cuba imposed by the United States.

V. Universal rejection of the embargo

5.1. Opposition within the United States

More, and more diverse, segments of United States society reject the senseless embargo policy against Cuba. Their number has increased in recent years, particularly since the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

Many voices within the United States are calling for an end to the policy, including such organizations as CubaNow, established in 2014, and the Cuba Consortium and Engage Cuba, established in 2015, which aim to improve bilateral relations and bring about the definitive lifting of the embargo.

These groups are increasingly active and, in most cases, not only operate in the economic and social fields but also lobby the executive and legislative branches, both in the federal Government and in several individual states. Engage Cuba has established 16 state councils around the United States.

The finalization of certain business deals between United States companies and Cuban companies is a concrete example of the growing opposition to the embargo within the United States, which is also evident in the results of various surveys conducted by such prestigious companies as Pew Research, YouGov, the television station CBS, the Atlantic Council think tank and Florida International University.

According to recent surveys in the United States, as many as 73 per cent of all Americans, 63 per cent of Cubans living in the United States and even 62 per cent of Republicans support the lifting of the embargo. Seventy-five per cent, that is three quarters, of Americans, 69 per cent of Cubans living in the United States and 62 per cent of Republicans are in favour of the normalization of bilateral ties.

Following are some examples of the opposition to the embargo within the United States:

- On 11 April 2016, the organization Engage Cuba established its Arkansas State Council to promote trade between Cuba and Arkansas, and to advocate for the lifting of the embargo.
- On 11 April 2016, Rick Crawford, a Republican Representative for Arkansas, stated that lifting the cash and carry requirement for agricultural exports was the best way forward for normalizing trade relations with Cuba.
- On 18 April 2016, at a National Press Club luncheon, the then Secretary of Commerce, Penny Pritzker, said that the isolation of Cuba had not worked and so a compromise approach should be tried.
- On 18 April 2016, Florida and Massachusetts Democratic Representatives Ted Deutch and Bill Keating, and Illinois and Georgia Republican Representatives Rodney Davis, Rob Woodall, Austin Scott and Tom Grave expressed support for the use of several air routes for travel to Cuba.
- On 10 May 2016, Democratic Senator for Pennsylvania Robert Casey stated that "it is time to take incremental steps towards a more open relationship with the people of Cuba, starting with allowing unrestricted travel to Cuba for Americans".

- On 26 May 2016, the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba and the Grupo Empresarial Agrícola de Cuba agricultural business group concluded a memorandum of understanding to promote the market for food and agricultural products between the two countries.
- On 1 June 2016, the then Secretary of Agriculture, Tom Vilsack, said that as links are established between the two countries, the political argument for lifting the embargo will be strengthened and eventually will reach the point at which there will be enough support in Congress to overcome resistance to its elimination.
- On 27 June 2016, the United States Department of the Treasury sent a statement to the newspaper *El Nuevo Herald* to the effect that OFAC did not consider the use of credit cards by authorized United States travellers in Cuba to be a violation of Section 103 of the Helms-Burton Act, which prohibits transactions involving nationalized property.
- On 7 July 2016, Arizona Republican Senator Jeff Flake, in a press release from his office, said that the time had come for Congress to eliminate the restrictions on United States travel to Cuba.
- On 7 July and 2 August 2016, Engage Cuba announced the establishment of its State Councils in Idaho and Colorado respectively to promote business between Cuba and those states, and thus contribute to the lifting of the embargo and the effort to normalize relations between the two countries.
- On 18 August 2016, the then presidential candidate for the Libertarian Party, Gary Johnson, said that he supported the changes that Obama had implemented in the policy towards Cuba and understood the hard feelings in the Cuban-American community. He added that offering free trade was the best way to promote change in Cuba.
- On 24 August 2016, the California State Senate passed a joint bill urging the United States Congress to support the President's initiative to normalize diplomatic relations with Cuba and make progress on legislation to help increase trade with the island.
- On 17 September 2016, the *Miami Herald* newspaper published an editorial commenting on a survey conducted by Florida International University, which revealed that more than half of the Cuban community in Miami was against the embargo restrictions.
- On 27 September 2016, John Boozman, Republican Senator for Arkansas, used his Twitter account to refer to the benefit that a change in the policy toward Cuba would bring for rice farmers in Arkansas and the rest of the country, since rice is important as a staple food in the Cuban diet.
- On 28 September 2016, the then presidential candidate for the Democratic Party, Hillary Clinton, in an article published in *El Nuevo Herald*, mentioned the need for the United States to support the Cuban people instead of returning to the policies of the past, listed some of the steps that President Obama had taken to normalize relations with Cuba, and pledged to work with Congress to complete that effort.
- On 14 October 2016, President Obama issued the Presidential Policy Directive on Cuba, stating that the embargo had failed and instructing departments and agencies of the United States Government to move towards the normalization of relations with Cuba.

- On 14 October 2016, the Chairman of the United States-Cuba Business Council of the United States Chamber of Commerce, Carlos Gutierrez, issued a statement in which he applauded the new amendments to the Cuba embargo regulations and the Presidential Policy Directive on Cuba signed by the then President.

- On 26 October 2016, the then Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communications, Ben Rhodes, stated on his official website and on his Twitter account that the United States would abstain for the first time in the vote on the General Assembly resolution calling for an end to the embargo on Cuba because there was no reason to vote to defend a failed policy that the country opposed.

- On 26 October 2016, the then United States Ambassador to the United Nations, Samantha Powers, announced to the General Assembly that her Government would abstain in the vote on the resolution on the embargo against Cuba and stated that the policy isolated the United States.

- On 26 October 2016, the United States press outlet Politico published an editorial that highlighted the broad and diverse impact of the abstention by the United States in the vote against the embargo in the General Assembly.

- On 27 October 2016, Ben Rhodes, in a Facebook Live interview conducted on the website of the news channel CNN, recognized that the United States Government was refusing to defend its own legislation with regard to the embargo at the international level because it believed it had failed. He supported the decision to abstain for the first time after 24 annual General Assembly votes.

- From 31 October to 4 November 2016, around 93 United States companies and more than 230 executives, led by the former Secretary of Commerce Carlos Gutierrez, participated in the 2016 Havana International Fair. In addition, there were delegations from four states and other business associations.

- On 4 November 2016, during the Havana International Fair, the President of the organization Engage Cuba, James Williams, said that until Congress fully lifted the embargo, United States companies would be stuck on the sidelines as foreign competitors moved in on the growing markets in Cuba.

- On 5 December 2016, the Republican Representatives for the States of Minnesota and Arkansas, Tom Emmer and Rick Crawford respectively, along with Florida and California Democrats Kathy Castor and Barbara Lee and other members of the Cuba Working Group in the House of Representatives, sent a letter to President-elect Donald Trump requesting his support for the restoration of trade ties with Cuba.

- On 5 December 2016, the polling firm Pew Research published a survey showing that 75 per cent of adults in the United States were in favour of restoring relations with Cuba and that 73 per cent supported an end to the embargo.

- On 15 December 2016, former White House deputy advisor Ben Rhodes, in an interview with the news channel MSNBC, said that if the new Government of the President-elect reversed the policy towards Cuba, not only would it be a misguided decision, but it would be rejected by many different institutions in the United States.

- On 30 January 2017, Engage Cuba established its State Council in the State of Virginia to promote ties with Cuba and the lifting of the trade restrictions imposed against our country.

- On 5 February 2017, Minnesota Republican Representative Tom Emmer noted the importance of normalizing trade relations between the United States and Cuba. He added that efforts were focused on educating members of Congress and President Trump on the economic and national security benefits of lifting the Cuba embargo.
- On 22 February 2017, the *Pittsburgh Post-Gazette* newspaper published an editorial that highlighted the trip by a delegation of 65 Pittsburghers to Cuba with the aim of exploring opportunities in business, culture and tourism.
- On 28 February 2017, Kansas Republican Senator Jerry Moran introduced a bill to lift the embargo on Cuba. In a press interview he said that Cuba was only 90 miles from the United States border, which made it a natural market for the nation's farmers and ranchers. He also said that, at a time when the United States needed new markets more than ever, lifting the embargo and opening up Cuba for United States agricultural commodities would help increase exports, create new jobs and boost the United States economy.
- On 10 March 2017, Arkansas Republican Representative Rick Crawford responded by telephone to questions from businessmen and farmers on doing business in Cuba and made it clear that there was broad bipartisan support within agribusiness for lifting the embargo on Cuba.
- On 14 March 2017, the United States Agriculture Coalition for Cuba released a statement expressing strong support for the Cuba Trade Act and welcoming Senator Moran's leadership in advancing critical opportunities for growth in United States agriculture. The statement also set out the Coalition's hope that the bill would pass the United States Senate so that work could begin on establishing full trade relations with Cuba.
- On 19 March 2017, the President of the National Association of Wheat Growers gave his backing to Kansas Republican Senator Jerry Moran's bill to lift the embargo and said that the embargo had failed and it was therefore time to open trade with Cuba.
- On 23 March 2017, Sonny Perdue, nominated for the position of Secretary of Agriculture in the Government of Donald Trump, said during his confirmation hearing that during a visit to Cuba in 2010 he had found that the country lacked payment capacity and faced restrictions on financing; he would support Cuban efforts to obtain products from the United States if private financing were available for such transactions.
- On 28 March 2017, the newspaper *The Gleaner* published an article by Kentucky Republican Representative James Comer in which he stated that, after his trip to Cuba, he supported lifting the embargo and intended to make it a priority in his work.
- On 30 March 2017, the Council of the City of Hartford, the capital of the State of Connecticut, adopted a resolution urging President Donald Trump and the United States Congress to end the embargo against Cuba. The resolution also calls for the lifting of the restrictions that prevent United States citizens from travelling freely to Cuba.
- On 4 April 2017, James Williams, President of the organization Engage Cuba, said that leaders from the American Farm Bureau and the United States Chamber of Commerce and Republican legislators had encouraged President Trump to change the "failed embargo policy" with Cuba and that, if trade with Cuba were expanded, thousands of jobs would be created in the United States.

- On 6 June 2017, the Michigan State Senate adopted a resolution to urge and request the Congress of the United States to develop and improve trade relations with Cuba.
- On 12 June 2017, the Democratic Senators Amy Klobuchar (Minnesota), Chris Murphy (Connecticut), Dick Durbin (Illinois), Debbie Stabenow (Michigan), Sheldon Whitehouse (Rhode Island), Elizabeth Warren (Massachusetts), Al Franken (Minnesota), Brian Schatz (Hawaii), Michael Bennet (Colorado), Jon Tester (Montana), Patrick Leahy (Vermont), Ron Wyden (Oregon), Claire McCaskill (Missouri) and Jeanne Shaheen (New Hampshire) sent an open letter to the Secretary of State, Rex Tillerson, in which they called for the maintenance and expansion of economic and political ties with Cuba and the lifting of the embargo.
- On 16 June 2017, the Executive Vice President and Head of International Affairs of the United States Chamber of Commerce, Myron Brilliant, issued a statement in which he said that the Chamber remained committed to removing the "antiquated policies" of the Cuban embargo.
- On 16 June 2017, the Chief Executive Officer of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, Rush Holt, issued a statement expressing the Association's concern about President Trump's announcement on his policy towards Cuba and reaffirming the Association's commitment to the exchange of scientific knowledge between the two countries.
- On 16 June 2017, the Deputy Executive Director for Public Policy of the Association of International Educators, Jill Welch, issued a statement describing the change of policy towards Cuba as harmful and the embargo as an outdated and failed policy, and called on Congress to permanently remove restrictions on travel to and trade with Cuba.

5.2. Opposition by the international community

At the international level, there is universal opposition to the embargo. Special communiqués and declarations demanding an end to the policy are being adopted in an increasing number of forums. Some examples are set out below:

- During the general debate at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly in September 2016, 39 heads of delegation, including 21 Heads of State or Government, declared themselves in favour of lifting the embargo.
- On 26 October 2016, the General Assembly adopted, for the twenty-fifth time in succession, the resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", with 191 votes in favour and 2 abstentions: the United States and Israel.

  During the debate on the resolution, 42 speakers from all regions of the planet took the floor and called for the immediate lifting of the embargo. These included seven representatives of regional and subregional coordination groups and organizations: the Group of 77 and China, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Group of African States, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations.
- On 13 September 2016, at the thirty-third regular session of the Human Rights Council, the negative impact of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba was denounced and a call

was issued for its full elimination. More than 30 developing countries, in addition to the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Group of African States and the Group of Arab States, among others, spoke in the interactive dialogue with the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights.

- At the seventeenth Summit Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held on 17 and 18 September 2016 at Isla de Margarita, Venezuela, a number of heads of delegation spoke against the embargo imposed on Cuba. Venezuela announced the 11 commitments that it would promote as President of the Movement, including working to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States.
- In their Ministerial Declaration of 23 September 2016, the ministers for foreign affairs of the member States of the Group of 77 and China rejected once again the application of the embargo against Cuba and the imposition of unilateral coercive measures against developing countries. The text was adopted at the fortieth annual Ministerial Meeting of the Group, held during the seventy-first session of the General Assembly in New York.
- At the twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, held in Cartagena, Colombia, on 28 and 29 October 2016, a special communiqué was adopted on the need to put an end to the embargo, including the Helms-Burton Act, and reiterating the emphatic rejection of the application of laws and measures contrary to international law. The United States President was called upon to take actions within his powers to put an end to the policy. The communiqué also reiterated the concern about and rejection of the intensification of the extraterritorial dimension of the embargo and the growing interference with the international financial transactions of Cuba.
- On 27 October 2016, at its forty-second regular meeting, the Latin American Council of the Latin American and Caribbean Economic System (SELA), gathered at its ministerial session in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, adopted a declaration on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, in which the United States Government was called upon to comply with General Assembly resolutions on the matter.
- The call on the United States Government to put an end to the blockade unconditionally was endorsed in the Political Declaration of the fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of CELAC, held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, on 25 January 2017. A special communiqué was also adopted, which, inter alia, reiterated the call on the United States President to "take all actions within his executive powers to substantially modify the application of the blockade against Cuba". The United States Congress was urged to proceed with the elimination of the blockade.
- At the twenty-eighth African Union Summit on 31 January 2017 in Addis Ababa, Heads of State and Government for the eighth time in succession called for the lifting of the United States embargo against Cuba. At the same time, the Heads of State and Government urged the United States President to bear in mind the positive results achieved in bilateral relations between the two countries in recent years.
- The Final Declaration of the fifth Meeting of Ministers for Foreign Affairs of CARICOM and the Republic of Cuba, adopted on 11 March 2017, reaffirmed

the call on the United States "to unconditionally put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade it has imposed on Cuba for more than five decades". The Declaration also expressed deep concern about and rejection of the extraterritorial dimension of the blockade and the interference with the international financial transactions of Cuba and urged the President of the United States to "use his broad executive powers to substantially change the application of the blockade and the Congress of that country to proceed with its elimination".

During the period under review, the website www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/ has registered more than 200 statements and complaints against the embargo by solidarity movements, friendship associations and Cubans living abroad and from various non-governmental organizations and provincial or municipal governments in various countries.

In addition to these complaints, statements have been made by various parliaments, political parties and government and intellectual figures. Some examples are set out below:

- On 25 June 2016, during an official visit to Cuba, the President of the seventieth session of the General Assembly, Mogens Lykketoft, stated that the United States embargo against Cuba was now overwhelmingly rejected by the international community and referred to the need to eliminate that restrictive measure applied to the island by Washington.

- On 19 July 2016, the participants of the twenty-seventh caravan of the interfaith platform Pastors for Peace reiterated their rejection of the United States embargo against Cuba and demanded an immediate end to the policy. Gail Walker, Executive Director of Pastors for Peace, during a visit to Cuba also called on the White House to return to Cuban sovereignty the territory that it was occupying illegally — the naval base at Guantánamo in the east of the island — and to cease its attempts to subvert the revolutionary process in Cuba.

- On 8 August 2016, it was reported that, during the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, the Rio de Janeiro committee for solidarity with Cuba was carrying out a visual campaign to end the embargo against Cuba. With the permission of the International Olympic Committee, advertisements were placed on buses transporting athletes and spectators to the Games, with a message reading "End the embargo against Cuba".

- On 10 September 2016, during the traditional Fête de l'Humanité (Festival of Humanity) in France, Patrick Le Hyaric, editor of the French newspaper *L'Humanité* and Member of the European Parliament, demanded an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States, which he described as a criminal and unjust siege.

- On 15 September 2016, the Senate of the Dominican Republic adopted a resolution rejecting the embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States. In the resolution, the Senate noted that the General Assembly had voiced its opposition to the embargo against Cuba, which had been imposed through the Helms-Burton Act of 1996 and which violated the principles of existing international law and those of the World Trade Organization.

- On 17 September 2016, during his official visit to Cuba, the President of Mongolia, Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj, stated that the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba made no sense and criticized that unilateral policy.

- On 17 September 2016, the Cuban emigrant organizations in Miami that make up the Alianza Martiana coalition organized a large convoy of vehicles in order to reiterate their demand for the immediate lifting of all the laws and regulations that make up the cruel and inhumane embargo policy.

- On 26 September 2016, in an interview with Prensa Latina, the then Minister for Foreign Affairs of Ecuador, Guillaume Long, described the United States embargo against Cuba as unjust, illegitimate and outdated and called for it to be lifted. He said, "Cuba absolutely has the full support of Ecuador ... which, together with its President, Rafael Correa, has always been very firm in its rejection of the embargo."

- On 26 September 2016, the Asociación Madres de Plaza de Mayo (Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo) in Argentina issued a communiqué "rejecting and condemning the murderous embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States, which inflicts a great deal of harm and difficulties on the people". In its emotive message, the association asked "all the citizens of the world to condemn the embargo and to voice their opinion to that effect so as to make known the global rejection of the measure".

- On 28 September 2016, during his official visit to Cuba, the Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Lesotho, Pakalitha Bethuel Mosisili, said that he would continue to advocate the lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States Government against Cuba.

- On 5 October 2016, during the official visit to Uganda of the Vice-President of the Council of State of the Republic of Cuba, Salvador Valdés Mesa, the Speaker of the Ugandan Parliament, Rebecca Kadaga, condemned the sanctions imposed on Cuba by the Government of the United States for more than 50 years and emphatically demanded the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

- On 11 October 2016, the Chamber of Deputies of Mexico stated its support for the elimination of the United States embargo against Cuba. In its statement, it urged the Mexican Government to uphold that position before the General Assembly of the United Nations and called on the United States Congress to put an end to the siege policy against the Caribbean island.

- On 14 October 2016, the National Assembly of Ecuador adopted a resolution in solidarity with Cuba and demanding an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government against Cuba. In addition to expressing solidarity with the Cuban people, the document stated that, although relations between Cuba and the United States were in the process of being re-established, "while the embargo remains in place and the occupation (of the United States naval base at Guantánamo) continues, normal ties cannot be restored".

- On 19 October 2016, in an open letter, the Russian academic Zhores Alferov, winner of the 2000 Nobel Prize in Physics, expressed his opposition to the United States embargo against Cuba. In his letter, the distinguished scientist wrote: "United States Administration: be worthy successors of the democratic traditions in this country — stop the blockade against Cuba and the occupation of Guantánamo!"

- On 19 October 2016, in a speech to mark the seventieth anniversary of the Maison de l'Amérique latine (House of Latin America) in Paris, the then President of France, François Hollande, advocated an end to the United States embargo against Cuba and stated his view that the policy made no sense today.

The President rejected the economic, commercial and financial embargo, "which inflicts suffering on the Cuban people".

- On 20 October 2016, the World Federation of Democratic Youth called on all its member organizations to join the international campaign against the unjust embargo which had been imposed by the United States Government on the Cuban people for more than five decades and which had remained in place even since the resumption of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Federation strongly condemned the unilateral policy of the United States towards Cuba, which "should be eliminated unconditionally and without delay".

- On 21 October 2016, the Portuguese Parliament unanimously adopted a resolution demanding an end to the long-standing United States embargo against Cuba. The resolution urged the Portuguese Government to advocate before the General Assembly of the United Nations an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the island.

- On 24 October 2016, speaking at United Nations Headquarters in New York, the Independent Expert of the Human Rights Council on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order, Alfred de Zayas, described as scandalous the extraterritorial nature of the United States embargo against Cuba. In an interview with Prensa Latina, the Independent Expert stated that at some point a court should consider the question of compensation for the island for the losses caused by the embargo, which were in the order of many thousands of millions of dollars.

- On 25 October 2016, the Parliament of Jamaica adopted, for the eighth time in succession, a motion calling for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. With the participation of parliamentarians from the two largest Jamaican political parties, a debate was held for more than an hour on the criminal policy imposed by the United States against Cuba for more than 50 years.

- On 26 October 2016, the Federation Council of the Russian Federation (the Russian Senate) unanimously adopted a resolution condemning the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba for more than half a century. The Chair of the Federation Council, Valentina Matvienko, referring to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by Washington, said: "It is time to eliminate the embargo against the courageous Cuban people."

Conclusions

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the Government of the United States against Cuba is intensifying and is applied rigorously. The policy remains the main obstacle to the development of the Cuban economy and the full enjoyment by the Cuban people of all their human rights.

The measures to strengthen the embargo announced by the Government of President Donald Trump on 16 June 2017 will affect and harm not only the Cuban people but also United States citizens and entities, whose opportunities for doing business with people and companies in Cuba and for exercising their constitutional right to travel freely are ever more restricted.

Fears persist within the banking sector in the United States and in third countries about developing relations with Cuba, even though the use of the United States dollar is authorized for international financial transactions involving Cuba. As at the date of this report, no significant transactions have taken place using the dollar.

During the period covered, the number of foreign financial and banking institutions refusing to deal with Cuba has increased. This has resulted in the cessation of operations, the closure of Cuban accounts abroad and the rejection of transfers to or from Cuba, even in non-dollar currencies.

The economic losses to the Cuban people as a result of the United States economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, taking into account the depreciation of the dollar against the price of gold on the international market, amount to $822,280,000,000. At current prices, over all these years, the embargo has inflicted losses of more than $130,178,600,000.

This report makes it clear that the economic, commercial and financial embargo is not merely a bilateral matter between the United States and Cuba. Its extraterritorial nature is being maintained and applied rigorously, with total impunity and in clear violation of international law.

The embargo against Cuba must cease. It is the most unjust, severe and long-lived system of unilateral sanctions ever applied to a country. On 25 occasions, the General Assembly, by an overwhelming majority, has decided in favour of respect for international law and compliance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of the United States must completely eliminate the embargo against Cuba unilaterally and unconditionally. This would be consistent with the overwhelming demand of the international community and the broad majority opinion of the many and varied voices within the United States calling for an end to this unjust policy.

Cuba and its people are confident that they can count on the support of the international community in their legitimate demand to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States Government.

Democratic People's Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[5 April 2017]

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea voted in favour of the resolution on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea condemns the United States embargo against Cuba as an act of encroachment on sovereignty, crime against humanity and infringement upon human rights, in violation of the Charter of the United Nations.

The United States has been imposing a unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against the Republic of Cuba since the first day of its foundation.

The United States unilateral embargo, which has threatened the sovereignty of Cuba and the right to its existence, is the outcome of the hostile United States policy against Cuba.

The damage to the economy of Cuba due to the United States economic embargo is estimated at astronomical figures.

In spite of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries last year, the atrocious economic embargo by the United States against Cuba remains persistent until today.

There are only a few modifications in its implementation methods, but the overall United States policy to bring about "regime change" in Cuba through its economic embargo has not changed.

The adoption of this resolution with the approval of the overwhelming majority in this session, in follow-up to previous sessions, is the reflection of the goodwill of the international community willing to show its support and solidarity towards the righteous struggle of the Government and the people of Cuba.

The Democratic People's Republic of Korea would like to extend once again its strong support and solidarity with the Government and the people of Cuba, struggling to safeguard the dignity and sovereignty of the nation, standing against the United States continued unilateral embargo.

Democratic Republic of the Congo

[Original: French]
[2 June 2017]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo welcomes the importance that the Secretary-General continues to attach to the issue of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, despite the many General Assembly resolutions calling for the embargo to be lifted.

It commends the recent steps taken by the United States to lift certain sanctions, in particular the restrictions on travel for family reasons and on remittances, the authorization for the development of communications services between the two countries and the reopening of the United States embassy in Havana and the Cuban embassy in Washington, D.C. It also highly appreciates the fact that the United States abstained for the first time when the issue was considered by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016.

However, the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo aligns itself with the will of the international community, expressed through the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/5 by 191 States, and supports any new resolution or initiative to engage Cuba and the United States in a constructive and fruitful dialogue to completely end the embargo.

Djibouti

[Original: English]
[5 April 2017]

The Republic of Djibouti wishes to reaffirm its fundamental commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the rules of international law. Furthermore, the Republic of Djibouti voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5, and thus has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to the above-mentioned resolution and, as such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

Dominica

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

The Commonwealth of Dominica has neither promulgated nor applied any law or measure which in any way hinders the freedom of trade and navigation of the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica unreservedly opposes the extraterritorial enforcement of national legislation that demonstrates disregard for and undermines the sovereignty of other States, without the authorization of the United Nations. Such unilateral actions are contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and customs and the principles of non-interference in the internal affairs of other States.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica has and will continue to embrace the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba as a fellow member of the United Nations, the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC), the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of Our America-People's Trade Agreement and a sister nation of the Caribbean. For over 35 years, the Governments and peoples of both nations have enjoyed strong cultural and political ties and solidarity in a number of areas of cooperation, especially in education, health and sports.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica believes that the establishment of diplomatic ties between the United States of America and the Republic of Cuba and the historic visit of the former President of the United States of America, Barack Obama, to the Republic of Cuba in 2016 have been undoubtedly progressive steps towards ending the anachronistic United States policy against the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba.

The Government of the Commonwealth of Dominica calls for the immediate implementation of actions that would result in the full integration of Cuba into the international economic, financial and trading systems and put an end to the suffering of the Cuban people.

Dominican Republic

[Original: Spanish]
[26 May 2017]

The Government of the Dominican Republic reiterates its call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, given that the status of bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba has changed, and there is no justification for maintaining these unilateral measures. In this context, the Dominican Republic will not adopt, promote or apply any provisions that involve intervening in the internal affairs of other States.

Ecuador

[Original: Spanish]
[21 April 2017]

In accordance with its long-established policy of condemning the decades-long illegal embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and its people, Ecuador has not promulgated and does not have in force any law or measure that could constitute any form of economic, commercial or financial embargo against Cuba.

At the same time, Ecuador calls for the immediate and unconditional lifting of all unilateral measures imposed by the United States of America against this Caribbean nation, which are causing it serious economic and social damage and subjecting its people to a large-scale humanitarian crisis.

By consistently supporting the successive resolutions adopted by the General Assembly on this issue, Ecuador has made clear its position that the extraterritorial application of unilateral measures against another country, such as the measures contained in the United States Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, is completely unacceptable.

The Ecuadorian Government welcomes the reversal, by the Administration of President Barack Obama in January 2017, of the "wet foot, dry foot" policy, which amended the 1966 Cuban Adjustment Act; this decision is fully consistent with the views of the international community, as expressed in various General Assembly resolutions.

Egypt

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

The Arab Republic of Egypt has voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5, in line with its consistent position that unilateral sanctions imposed outside the framework of the United Nations are not a course of action that Egypt can condone.

The embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba constitutes a clear violation of the principles of multilateralism and is in breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, as well as of the respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and mutual trust.

The unjust and unjustifiable embargo causes undue economic and social hardship on the Cuban people. It also affects the vital sectors of the Cuban economy. The embargo is an anachronism from a bygone era that must be lifted. The embargo has an extended effect on companies and citizens from third countries. The extraterritorial effects violate the sovereign rights of many Member States. Egypt is deeply concerned over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo, which is an added argument in favour of the prompt elimination of those unjustified sanctions.

Egypt welcomes the establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States, the historic visit in 2016 by the President of the United States to Cuba and the voting record on General Assembly resolution 71/5, with no Member State voting against it.

Egypt also recognizes the advances made in some areas with regard to the regulations issued by the Government of the United States. Egypt is hopeful that such steps will pave the way towards the normalization of all aspects of bilateral relations between the two countries.

However, while such advances constitute a step in the right direction, they remain insufficient, as the imposition of the blockade has remained unchanged and the laws and regulations underpinning it continue to be in force and implemented with utmost severity.

Egypt believes that many steps and brave decisions still need to be taken by the United States towards the immediate lifting of the embargo imposed against Cuba to allow for the full normalization of relations between the two countries.

Egypt believes that the embargo continues to be an absurd and morally insupportable policy, which has not served the purpose of breaking the Cuban people's determination to control their own future. And in spite of all the detrimental repercussions and adverse impacts of the embargo, the Government of Cuba has made enormous efforts in meeting the needs of its people.

What has been proved through over 55 years of embargo against Cuba is that, in this globalized world, the Cuban people can still survive thanks to their perseverance and hope.

Egypt hopes that the dialogue between the two countries, based on mutual respect and on observance of the principles of international law and of the Charter, will lead to the immediate lifting of the embargo and the normalization of bilateral relations between the two countries in all their aspects.

In this new context, Egypt once again urges the United States to seize this historic opportunity, to comply immediately and fully with all 24 General Assembly resolutions, which were adopted by the overwhelming majority of the international community, and to put an end to the unjustified embargo, which should never have existed and must cease once and for all.

El Salvador

[Original: Spanish]
[19 May 2017]

The Republic of El Salvador, which is committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, is fully aware of the need to eliminate the unilateral application of economic and commercial measures by one State against another that affect the development of the latter's people, and reaffirms its strong support for calls to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Almost two years after the adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals, it has been proven that only by working together can solutions be found to various challenges. Therefore, there is no place for the disregard for fundamental principles and freedoms that results from the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Furthermore, it is well known that the embargo against Cuba affects not only the economy but also sectors of vital importance to the Cuban people, such as health, education, food, sports and culture. El Salvador therefore considers the embargo to be a deplorable action that seriously affects the progress and development of a sovereign State and shows disrespect for the dignity and sovereignty of the nation.

It should be noted that, despite the unilateral measure, Cuba, with perseverance and determination, has managed to overcome the obstacles and adversities facing it. In this light, El Salvador welcomes the efforts the country has been making to open and strengthen its economy and to improve its production processes.

El Salvador considers that unilateral actions such as the embargo imposed on the Cuban people seriously undermine all the efforts being made today by the international community to promote peace; cooperation; development and social justice; human rights; political, economic and social integration; and unity and solidarity among countries.

Finally, the Republic of El Salvador recognizes the growing strength of the international community's call to lift the embargo, and once more joins this call and reiterates the urgent need to end the application of the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

Equatorial Guinea

[Original: Spanish]
[17 May 2017]

Through its various statements on the necessity of ending the embargo against Cuba, the Republic of Equatorial Guinea has always consistently indicated and insistently focused on the urgent need to end the economic blockade and isolation to which Cuba had been subjected for many years.

Between April 2015 and April 2016 there were very positive developments, including the initiative of the then President of the United States, Barack Obama, to restore diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, and the subsequent re-opening of the respective embassies of both countries, in addition to Mr. Obama's visit to Cuba.

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea calls for a continuation of this positive trend which sparked great optimism, and for the initiative taken by Mr. Obama to be now supported and consolidated with actions, steps and decisions by the current Government of the United States that will lead to a complete and irreversible lifting of the embargo against Cuba, in all aspects: economic, commercial and financial.

Such measures would allow Cuba to reach its full development potential in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

Eritrea

[Original: English]
[24 May 2017]

The Government of the State of Eritrea has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

While Eritrea views positively the recent diplomatic developments between the United States and Cuba, Eritrea remains strongly opposed to the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, which is inconsistent with the principles of international law, and undermines the efforts of Cuba and its people to achieve all the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

In this regard, Eritrea joins other States in calling upon the United States to immediately repeal or invalidate all laws or measures that continue to adversely impact the livelihoods of the Cuban people and Cuban nationals living in other countries.

Ethiopia

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia views the continued imposition of an economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba as a violation of the principles of multilateralism and as a breach of the principles of the Charter of the United Nations, of respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and mutual trust.

The unilateral measure of the United States directed against Cuba has caused social and economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living conditions of the Cuban people.

The Government of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia therefore wishes to see the embargo lifted in order for the people and Government of Cuba to enjoy their sovereignty in accordance with the principles and values enshrined in the Charter.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia believes that constructive dialogue is necessary to foster mutual trust and understanding among the nations of the world.

European Union

[Original: English]
[15 May 2017]

The European Union and its member States believe the unilateral measures of the United States against Cuba are increasingly outdated and should be ended. The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States contributes to the economic problems in Cuba, negatively affecting the living standards of the Cuban people and having consequences in the humanitarian field as well. The measures directed against Cuba negatively affect the interests of the European Union and violate commonly accepted rules of international trade.

The European Union and its member States have been clearly expressing their opposition to the extraterritorial extension of the United States embargo, such as that contained in the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996.

In November 1996, the Council of Ministers of the European Union adopted a regulation and a joint action to protect the interest of natural or legal persons resident in the European Union against the extraterritorial effects of the Helms-Burton legislation, which prohibits compliance with that legislation. Moreover, on 18 May 1998, at the European Union/United States Summit in London, a package was agreed covering waivers of titles III and IV of the Helms-Burton Act; a commitment by the United States administration to resist future extraterritorial legislation of that kind; and an understanding with respect to disciplines for the strengthening of investment protection. The European Union calls upon the United States to implement its side of the understanding of 18 May 1998.

Moreover, in December 2016, the European Union repealed its own common position of 2 December 1996 on Cuba, and the European Union and the Government of Cuba signed, on 12 December 2016, a Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement, which reinforce the European Union in its conviction that engagement with Cuba is the correct approach to contributing to the country's modernization and positive change.

Fiji

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

In relation to the call in General Assembly resolution 71/5 to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, the Government of Fiji reaffirms its support for the resolution.

The Government of Fiji reiterates its position that all States should refrain from imposing economic sanctions of the nature referred to in the resolution, thereby conforming to the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of Fiji wishes to reaffirm that it has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Fiji. On the contrary, Fiji is intent on developing cooperative relations with all countries and in this regard fully supports the call for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba.

Gabon

[Original: French]
[20 June 2017]

The Government of Gabon, reiterating its commitment to peace through the peaceful settlement of disputes, voted in favour of resolution 71/5 and previous resolutions. It did so in accordance with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and the purposes and principles of that instrument, which are based on cooperation among States. Gabon constantly strives to promote friendly relations and the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States.

Gabon welcomes the progress made recently, particularly the diplomatic rapprochement between Cuba and the United States of America, and encourages both countries to advance further along this path.

Nonetheless, it remains concerned about the maintenance of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and its adverse effects on the Cuban people and Cuban nationals living in other countries.

Gabon expresses its strong hope that the United Nations resolutions echoing the collective call for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented, thus allowing Cuba to participate in and benefit from international trade.

Gabon also calls on the international community to continue its efforts with a view to the final normalization of relations between the two countries.

Gambia

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

The Government of the Gambia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5. Accordingly, the Gambia is opposed to the continued enactment or application of such laws, acts or measures against Cuba that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation. The embargo against Cuba contravenes the fundamental principles of international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States, violating the sovereign equality of States and the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in the domestic affairs of other Member States. The embargo has no legitimate or moral justifications given the fact that it continues to undermine the essential rights to economic emancipation and to development of the Cuban people; it must come to an immediate end.

As a responsible member of the international community, the Gambia therefore joins other Member States in calling for the immediate repeal or invalidation of such laws, measures or policies that impede the free flow of international trade and navigation as they are contrary to the purposes and principles of the Charter and international law.

It is our fervent desire that the relevant United Nations resolutions echoing collective concerns regarding the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba will be respected and implemented without further delay.

Georgia

[Original: English]
[20 April 2017]

Georgia reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5. Georgia has not promulgated or applied laws or taken measures against Cuba that would prohibit or restrict economic, commercial or financial relations between Cuba and Georgia.

Ghana

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

In conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and the fundamental norms of international law, the Government of Ghana continues to uphold the principles of sovereign equality and non-interference in the internal affairs of each state. Also, the Government believes in the freedoms of trade and navigation and the rights of sovereign states to choose their own political, economic, cultural and social systems towards meeting the collective aspirations of their people.

In compliance with General Assembly resolutions, including paragraph 2 of resolution 71/5, therefore, the Government of Ghana has consistently refrained from legislating and promulgating measures that are designed to adversely affect the economic, political and social interests of the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba.

Indeed, Ghana has had very cordial and mutually beneficial relations with Cuba, which have continued to grow from strength to strength, particularly in the fields of education and health, where Cuba has managed to achieve very high standards of service delivery to the benefit of millions of people in the world.

The Government of Ghana has always voted in favour of relevant resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo on Cuba and, therefore, welcomes the positive rapprochement in diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba since July 2015 and the subsequent historic visit to Havana by the former President, Barack Obama, in March 2016.

While commending the United States of America for this goodwill gesture towards the normalization of relations with Cuba, the Government of Ghana wishes to call for the complete lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba by the United States of America. The Government of Ghana remains concerned that these existing restrictions may have adverse effects on the socioeconomic development aspirations of Cuba, including its ability to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals.

We affirm the rights of the Cuban people to freely pursue their political, economic and social systems. Ghana, therefore, reiterates its call upon the United States of America to take all the measures necessary to completely lift the embargo against Cuba.

Grenada

[Original: English]
[11 May 2017]

Grenada, as a sovereign, independent State with firm belief in the sovereign equality of States, continues to recognize, uphold and adhere to the principles of the United Nations, including the sovereign equality of States.

Against this backdrop, Grenada has welcomed moves by the United States and Cuba towards rapprochement in their relations and towards the genuine cognizance of the sovereign equality of the Republic of Cuba by the United States of America.

Grenada reiterates that it neither promulgates, applies nor condones laws and measures that encroach on or undermine the sovereign rights of any State or laws that restrict and hinder international trade or navigation by any State. Therefore, Grenada issues another clarion call for the removal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Government and people of Cuba by the United States of America.

For more than 50 years, the measures contained in the embargo have created untold hardship for the Cuban people and have been counterproductive to the goal of human development; violated the sovereign rights of all Cubans; contravened the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of States; and have not lent credence towards the moves to rapprochement by the United States and Cuba and the peaceful coexistence of both countries within a stable international society.

Grenada thus unreservedly supports General Assembly resolution 71/5, which calls for strict compliance with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, and which speaks to the necessity of ending said economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, and adds its voice to that of the international community in expressing the hope that in the near future this unilateral imposition would be an imposition of the past, in the spirit of true and sincere rapprochement.

Guatemala

[Original: Spanish]
[16 May 2017]

The State of Guatemala has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures contrary to the principles and purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations or measures contrary to the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Guatemala rejects any unilateral measures that run counter to the principles of free trade and international law and urges those countries that continue to maintain such provisions in their domestic legislation to take the necessary steps to repeal or rescind them.

Accordingly, Guatemala is able to state that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Guatemala and Cuba.

Guatemala welcomes the progress made in the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba, which it trusts will lead to the rapid normalization of economic, commercial and financial relations between the two countries.

Guatemala calls for a continuation of the fruitful dialogue between the two parties and appeals to the international community to continue to support the objective of ending the embargo against Cuba.

Guinea

[Original: French]
[29 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Guinea welcomes the improvement in the bilateral relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America.

The significant progress made in areas such as health research and trade reinforce the international view that a climate of dialogue and cooperation needs to be established between the two countries, following decades of economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on the Cuban people.

It is for that reason that the Government of the Republic of Guinea had welcomed with a great deal of hope the fact that the United States abstained, for the first time since the beginning of the embargo, during the vote held at the previous session of the General Assembly, on 26 October 2016.

As in the past, the Government of Guinea looks at this embargo from the point of view, inter alia, of freedom of trade and navigation. The Government of Guinea calls upon all States to abstain from implementing laws and regulations such as the Helms-Burton law, the extraterritorial effects of which violate the sovereignty of other States.

The Government of the Republic of Guinea urges Cuba and the United States to continue the dialogue based on mutual understanding and reciprocal respect, with a view to the complete lifting of the embargo by the United States Congress.

Guinea-Bissau

[Original: English]
[20 April 2017]

Guinea-Bissau reaffirms that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of national laws are contrary to the need to promote dialogue and to give effect to the principles and objectives set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

The Government of Guinea-Bissau has never endorsed any resolutions that have been adopted against Cuba, much less, at the internal level, mechanisms that are embodied in their fulfilment, as they are unilateral in nature and contrary to the rules of international law, in particular as regards the liberalization of trade and navigation.

Our country regrets, however, that this blockade of more than 56 years continues to affect the Cuban people with significant damages in all sectors crucial to the Cuban economy, such as public health, nutrition and agriculture, as well as banking, trade, investment and tourism.

In addition, this decades-long blockade has impeded the progress of socioeconomic development and, while it persists, will obstruct Cuba's efforts to achieve sustainable development.

Although significant steps have been taken by the Governments of the United States of America and Cuba towards the normalization of bilateral relations, the Republic of Guinea-Bissau recognizes the importance attached by the Secretary-General to this issue and calls for compliance with General Assembly resolution 71/5.

It also calls upon the international community to continue its efforts to ensure a constructive dialogue between the two countries with a view to restoring normal relations between the two States.

Guyana

[Original: English]
[10 May 2017]

The Government of Guyana has consistently demonstrated its unwavering respect for, and adherence to, the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including those stated in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

To this end, Guyana has not enacted any legislation or adopted any policies and practices the extraterritorial effects of which affect the sovereignty of other States.

Guyana has also, as a matter of principle, maintained a consistent position of firm opposition to the economic, financial and commercial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reiterates the call for an end to this policy. Guyana encourages the process of dialogue between the United States of America and Cuba and salutes the positive endeavours by the two countries towards the strengthening of amicable relations, including the visit to Havana by the former President of United States, Barack Obama.

The Government of Guyana is in full compliance with and remains fully supportive of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

The Government of Guyana also welcomes the steps being pursued by the Government of the United States and the Government of Cuba to remove the impediments to the full normalization of relations between their two countries and expresses the hope that these felicitous developments will lead to a permanent resolution of this long-standing issue.

Haiti

[Original: French]
[8 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Haiti has never promulgated any laws, legal provisions or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 71/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016.

Haiti reaffirms its commitment and adherence to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-interference and non-intervention in the internal affairs of States as well as the right of States and their nationals to the free enjoyment of the benefits of freedom of navigation and trade. There is a need for States to act in accordance with these principles of international law by renouncing unilateral measures that can affect the social, economic and financial structures of other States.

Based on these principles, the Government of Haiti has always supported the efforts of the sister republic of Cuba regarding the urgent necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo which has been affecting that country for many years, within the United Nations and at various summits of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC).

The Government of the Republic of Haiti therefore welcomes the progress made in bilateral relations between the United States and Cuba and hopes that such progress may lead the new United States administration to lift the economic and financial embargo imposed on Cuba.

Honduras

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2017]

In fulfilment of its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, Honduras has not promulgated or applied any unilateral economic and commercial laws or measures against other States that might affect the free flow of international trade.

Iceland

[Original: English]
[20 June 2017]

The Government of Iceland reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5. Iceland neither promulgates nor applies any of the laws or measures referred to in resolution 71/5. Iceland does not apply trade or economic legislation against Cuba that restricts or discourages trade with or investment in or from Cuba. Iceland opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country.

India

[Original: English]
[19 April 2017]

India has not promulgated or applied any laws of the type referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5 and, as such, the necessity of repealing or invalidating any such laws or measures does not arise.

India has consistently opposed any unilateral measure by countries that impinge on the sovereignty of another country. These include any attempt to extend the application of a country's laws extraterritorially to other sovereign nations.

India recalls the Final Documents adopted by the Seventeenth Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries held on Margarita Island, Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of) from 13 to 18 September, 2016 on this subject.

the Santa Cruz Declaration of the Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Group of 77, as well as other high-level decisions of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, and urges the international community to adopt all necessary measures to protect the sovereign rights of all countries.

Indonesia

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

Indonesia consistently expresses its strong opposition to unilateral embargoes and extraterritorial coercive measures against the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of entities or persons under their jurisdiction, and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The imposition of the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba violates the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, which are enshrined in many international legal instruments, including the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States.

The unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against Cuba has continued to cause significant economic and social hardship as regards the well-being of the people of Cuba, in particular those in vulnerable situations, including women, children and older persons.

Indonesia welcomes the restoration of diplomatic relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America and urges the Government of the United States of America to promptly end its unilateral embargo against Cuba.

Iran (Islamic Republic of)

[Original: English]
[11 May 2017]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation, has not applied nor promulgated any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Iran reiterates its strong opposition to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, as well as to the extraterritorial application of United States domestic laws and the adoption of discriminatory trade practices.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its serious dismay at the continued promulgation of the economic, commercial and financial sanctions against Cuba, despite the annual adoption of a General Assembly resolution calling for the lifting of, and putting an end to, the embargo against Cuba by the Government of the United States of America.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran reiterates its strong belief that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba runs counter to the principles of international law governing relations among States and contradicts the letter and spirit of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for promoting solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations among nations. Such measures continue to adversely affect the living conditions and the human rights of the Cuban people and will hamper the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba, which has lasted for decades, serves no purpose other than inflicting tremendous hardship and suffering on the people of Cuba, especially women and children. The embargo has seriously jeopardized the legitimate rights and interests of Cuba and other States, as well as the freedom of trade and navigation, and therefore has to be immediately lifted as requested in all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.

The adoption of the General Assembly resolution, with such a wide range of support and over so many years, clearly indicates the strong objection of the international community to unilateral economic coercive measures in general, and the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba in particular. It is also a sign of increasing sympathy with the aspiration of the Government and people of Cuba to put an end to this unlawful and inhumane embargo. Furthermore, as the international community is facing major challenges, such as food insecurity and malnutrition, environmental degradation, increased poverty and unemployment, the imposition of the embargo seems unjustifiable more than ever and deserves stronger objections at the international level.

The Islamic Republic of Iran urges the States Members of the United Nations to adopt all necessary measures to put an end to this inhumane embargo against the people and the Government of Cuba and to protect the sovereign right of all other countries to expand trade and economic relations with Cuba.

The Islamic Republic of Iran remains opposed to the application of unilateral economic and trade measures by the United States against other countries that block the flow of people, trade and finance, as well as to the extraterritorial application and effects of such national legislation on the sovereignty of other States. Such unilateral coercive measures are contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among States.

The Islamic Republic of Iran, which has long been subject to economic coercive measures, shares the concern of the Government and people of Cuba and therefore emphasizes the urgent need to put an end to such measures and to fully implement the content of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Iraq

[Original: Arabic]
[2 May 2017]

Iraq believes that unilateral economic sanctions are illegal and contrary to the principles and purposes of the United Nations and the principles of international law. Iraq therefore voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on ending the embargo against Cuba, which was adopted in 2016, and welcomes the progress that has been made towards normalization of relations between the Cuba and the United States of America.

As a matter of principle, Iraq views economic measures as an illegal form of collective punishment that affects the vulnerable and weak groups of society, in particular children, women, the elderly and the sick. Accordingly, Iraq rejects any measures that would harm those groups.

Iraq believes that national laws have no extraterritorial effect.

Iraq affirms the right of Cuba to establish relations with any State in the world for the purpose of promoting its development in any area. Iraq has never promulgated or adopted any laws or measures that prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Jamaica

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

The Government of Jamaica remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the principles of the sovereign equality of all Member States, non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation. In this context, Jamaica opposes the unilateral application of economic and trade measures by any State against another that would impinge on the freedom of commerce and economic cooperation between Member States.

In keeping with the obligations under the Charter and under international law, and pursuant to General Assembly resolution 71/5, the Government of Jamaica has not promulgated any legislation or measure that would infringe on the sovereignty of any State or its lawful national interests.

Jamaica and Cuba maintain strong bonds of cooperation, primarily in the areas of health, education, sports, agriculture and services. The relations between the two countries are based on the principles of sovereignty, mutual respect, non-interference in internal affairs, and economic and social cooperation, consistent with the Charter.

In October 2016, for the eighth consecutive year, the Parliament of Jamaica approved a resolution in full support of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, noting the adverse effects on the economic and social development of Cuba, as well as on commercial transactions between Jamaica and that country.

Jamaica has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions, including resolution 71/5, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, and urges all Member States to uphold the Charter by ceasing the application of such inimical measures.

Within regional forum, Jamaica continues to advocate the removal of the embargo against Cuba, including at the recent Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in January 2017 and at the Fifth Caribbean Community-Cuba Ministerial Meeting, held in March 2017.

Jamaica maintains that the imposition of the embargo continues to have negative effects on Cuba and the Cuban population, and therefore calls upon the United States of America to take the necessary steps towards a complete and immediate removal of the embargo.

Japan

[Original: English]
[18 May 2017]

The Government of Japan has not promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind that are referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

The Government of Japan believes that the economic policy of the United States towards Cuba should be considered primarily as a bilateral issue. However, Japan shares the concern, arising from the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act of 1996 (known as the Helms-Burton Act) and the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, that, if application of such legislation causes undue hardship in relation to the economic activities of the enterprises or nationals of a third party, the legislation is likely to run counter to international law regarding the extraterritorial application of domestic laws.

The Government of Japan has been closely following the situation in relation to the above-mentioned legislation and the surrounding circumstances, and its concern remains unchanged. Having considered the matter with the utmost care, Japan voted in favour of resolution 71/5.

The Government of Japan welcomes and supports the recent developments in the relationship between Cuba and other nations, including the reestablishment of formal diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America in July 2015, as they contribute to regional stability and development. The Government of Japan expresses its hope for the continued progress of those developments.

Jordan

[Original: English]
[18 May 2017]

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has not applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

The Government of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan has consistently voted in favour of the above-mentioned resolutions on the item and reaffirms its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations.

Kazakhstan

[Original: English]
[24 May 2017]

In its foreign policy, Kazakhstan is guided by the principles of international law and stands for the rights of nations to develop according to their own way of development.

Kazakhstan strongly condemns any unilateral acts that affect the sovereignty of another State.

Kazakhstan has never accepted any national regulations that infringe, impede or retard the development of foreign countries, including in the economic, commercial and financial spheres.

In this regard, Kazakhstan, like the overwhelming majority of the international community, calls for the lifting of the embargo against Cuba and the cessation of all acts that are contrary to the principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

Kenya

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Government of Kenya reaffirms and reiterates its objection to the unilateral coercive measures that are at variance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Kenya has never unilaterally promulgated or applied laws or measures of any kind that have extraterritorial effects affecting the sovereignty of other States. The majority of the States Members of the United Nations and member States of other organizations have called for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. Kenya believes in and upholds the principles of maintaining friendly relations, including commerce among nations for the promotion of peace and security, as indispensable ingredients for the social and economic advancement of all people.

Kenya will continue to oppose the blockade against Cuba which has negatively affected the citizens of Cuba and, in line with the position of the African Union, calls for the immediate lifting of the long-standing and unjustifiable economic and trade embargo imposed on Cuba, so as to allow that country to enjoy all the legitimate prospects for its sustained development. The Government of the Republic of Kenya has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

The Government of Kenya welcomes and supports the positive developments in the relationship between Cuba and the United States of America following the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America as a positive step towards the normalization of relations.

Kiribati

[Original: English]
[8 April 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Kiribati reaffirms its support for the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations, has not taken any measures that might impair economic, commercial or financial relations between Kiribati and Cuba or any other country for that matter.

The resolution addresses moral and humanitarian considerations which, when implemented, will positively contribute to improving the general welfare and well-being of the people of Cuba.

Kuwait

[Original: English]
[12 April 2017]

The State of Kuwait supports the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/5 with an emphasis on the need to comply with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, the sovereign equality of States and the non-interference in their internal affairs, as well as the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Furthermore, the State of Kuwait has always voted in favour of the resolutions of the General Assembly calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba.

Kyrgyzstan

[Original: Russian]
[12 May 2017]

In its foreign policy, the Kyrgyz Republic strictly adheres to the fundamental norms and principles of international law, including the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, and advocates respect for the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Kyrgyz Republic has not promulgated or applied against the Republic of Cuba any of the laws or measures referred to in the preamble to resolution 71/5.

Lao People's Democratic Republic

[Original: English]
[10 May 2017]

The Lao People's Democratic Republic is of the view that an embargo, with its extraterritorial implications, not only hinders the socioeconomic development of a nation on which such embargo is being imposed, but also contradicts the principles and the purposes enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law and the sovereign equality of States as well as of freedom of international trade and navigation. As such, the Lao People's Democratic Republic has neither promulgated nor introduced laws and measures of the kind referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

In the context of the implementation of resolution 71/5, the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the recent positive developments in the process to normalize bilateral relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America, as demonstrated by the decision of the United States to abstain from voting on resolution 71/5 in 2016, in addition to the restoration of diplomatic ties that led to the reopening of embassies in in Havana and in Washington, D.C., and other measures that have been taken thus far. This positive momentum should be further promoted and concretized by lifting the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba. The gesture would act as a catalyst and would reflect the genuine efforts towards normalization of the relations between the two countries.

Lebanon

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The Government of Lebanon fully complies with General Assembly resolution 71/5 concerning the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. This is a long-standing position of Lebanon, based on the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which stress the need to respect the sovereignty of States.

Lesotho

[Original: English]
[27 June 2017]

The Kingdom of Lesotho reaffirms its commitment to the provisions and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, provide for sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Kingdom of Lesotho is deeply concerned about the harmful effects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In this regard, Lesotho calls upon the United States to lift the embargo imposed against Cuba.

Liberia

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

For many decades, more than two thirds of the States Members of the United Nations have consistently voted in favour of lifting the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed on Cuba by the United States. The rejection by the international community has signalled the need for the United States to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo on Cuba.

The resumption of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States is a welcome overture that shows a willingness for cooperation. Liberia expresses its hope that the economic, commercial and financial embargo unilaterally imposed on Cuba will be lifted in furtherance of a normalization of bilateral relations between the two nations and the economic well-being of the Cuban people.

The Government of Liberia unreservedly supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and will continue to collaborate with other States Members of the United Nations towards the achievement of that worthy objective.

Libya

[Original: Arabic]
[16 June 2017]

Libya reiterates its strong opposition to unilateral measures imposed on States for political purposes, and stresses that such conduct does not help to resolve differences between States but, rather, complicates and deepens them.

Libya has consistently expressed its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law. It has not enacted or applied any laws of the kind referred to in paragraphs 2 and 3 of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Libya does not support the application of coercive unilateral extraterritorial economic measures, because such measures clearly violate the principles of international law.

Libya voted in favour of resolution 71/5 because it opposes the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba. It calls on States to resolve their differences by peaceful means and to shun unilateral coercive measures, which violate the principles of the Charter and human rights, and impede the efforts of the United Nations to achieve development, one of the Organization's lofty objectives.

Liechtenstein

[Original: English]
[3 April 2017]

The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. The Government of the Principality of Liechtenstein is furthermore of the view that legislation whose implementation entails measures or regulations having extraterritorial effects is inconsistent with generally recognized principles of international law.

Madagascar

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Republic of Madagascar has never promulgated nor applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to resolution General Assembly 71/5, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

In this connection, the Republic of Madagascar reiterates its support for all measures adopted with a view to ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Malawi

[Original: English]
[3 July 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Malawi, which has diplomatic relations with Cuba, has never promulgated country-specific targeted legislation or instructions barring trade or cooperation with Cuba. As such, following the adoption of the resolution there is not much to be done to comply with the resolution in terms of the law.

Malaysia

[Original: English]
[23 May 2017]

Malaysia remains opposed to all forms of unilateral economic, commercial and financial sanctions and embargoes that contravene the norms of international law and contradict the purpose of the Charter of the United Nations. Unilateral measures are discriminating in nature and are intended to serve specific political agendas against target countries. Such unilateral economic measures may not only restrict free and unregulated business across borders, but they may also hamper social development, such as employment opportunities and the living conditions of the general population. In the case of Cuba, the embargo has caused hindrance to the nation's development and suffering for the Cuban people.

In this regard, Malaysia fully supports the efforts of the international community, as set out in General Assembly resolution 71/5 and other relevant resolutions, that call for an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on any State Member of the United Nations.

Maldives

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The Republic of Maldives does not impose any sanctions against any country without an explicit mandate from the General Assembly or the Security Council, or from those international organizations of which the Maldives is a member. Accordingly, the Republic of Maldives has not imposed any sanctions on Cuba nor has it enacted any laws or regulations that would contravene the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/5, in support of which the Republic of Maldives had voted.

Mali

[Original: French]
[6 June 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Mali has always voted in favour of General Assembly resolutions on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

The Government of the Republic of Mali, which fully supports resolution 71/5, adopted on 26 October 2016, has not promulgated any laws or applied any measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution.

As in the past, Mali maintains its position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba should be lifted.

Mauritania

[Original: French]
[22 June 2017]

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Mauritania disagrees with and is opposed to all aspects of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

The Islamic Republic of Mauritania remains committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in the internal affairs of States and freedom of trade and navigation.

Mauritius

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

Mauritius reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, including the principle of the sovereign equality of States, and non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. In line with the above principles, and in conformity with international law, Mauritius has not promulgated any law or measure aimed at imposing a unilateral economic, commercial or financial embargo against Cuba.

The Republic of Mauritius enjoys good bilateral relations with Cuba and remains open to developing its trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Mexico

[Original: Spanish]
[2 June 2017]

Mexico reaffirms its position that any type of political, economic or military sanction imposed on a State may only result from a decision or recommendation made by the Security Council or General Assembly. Multilateralism continues to be the best way of settling disputes and ensuring peaceful coexistence between States.

For this reason, the Government of Mexico has repeatedly reiterated its firm rejection of the application of unilateral laws or measures imposing an economic embargo against any State Member of the United Nations, and of the use of coercive measures that do not have the legitimate backing of the international community based on the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mexico supports the full normalization of ties between Cuba and the United States of America, which will be beneficial for the hemisphere in general.

For their part, Mexico and Cuba continue to deepen their political and economic links and cooperation, building a broad agenda in line with developments in the economic and social situation in that country.

The first State visit to Mexico by President Raúl Castro Ruz of Cuba took place in Mérida, Yucatán, on 6 and 7 November 2015, and President Enrique Peña Nieto, who had already visited Cuba in January 2014, visited that country again in November 2016. At the level of foreign ministers, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Mexico, Luis Videgaray, met with his counterpart, Bruno Rodríguez, in the framework of the Twenty-second Ordinary Meeting of the Ministerial Council of the Association of Caribbean States (held in Havana on 9 and 10 March 2017) where they agreed to further strengthen political dialogue and consensus on issues of common concern.

The sixteenth Mexico-Cuba inter-parliamentary meeting was held from 16 to 18 February 2017 in Mérida. A large delegation of legislators from the two countries engaged in a fluid dialogue.

In the past three years, the two countries have signed 14 legal instruments, the most recent being an agreement on scientific, technical and academic cooperation in health (signed on 18 May 2017, in Havana).

In order to continue to strengthen the ties of cooperation and friendship, the fourth meeting of the Mexico-Cuba Working Group will be held from 27 to 29 September 2017, in Havana, at which economic issues and technical and scientific cooperation, and educational and cultural matters will be addressed.

Cuba is the third most important trading partner of Mexico in the Caribbean. In 2016, the two countries' bilateral trade reached US$ 333.6 million: Mexican exports amounted to US$ 342.4 million and imports from Cuba amounted to US$ 9.2 million. Mexico is consolidating its trade relationship with Cuba based on the 2001 Economic Complementarity Agreement No. 51 between Mexico and Cuba, which was strengthened in 2014 and 2015, and in accordance with the 2002 agreement on the promotion and reciprocal protection of investments.

There are Mexican companies operating in Cuba, and the Government of Mexico supports several investment projects on the island, including some in the Mariel special development zone. In fact, the first company to be approved to operate in the area was Mexican.

In November 2016, Cuba participated in the international business forum between Mexico and the Wider Caribbean (Cancun 2016 Forum), with representatives from companies, the Chamber of Commerce of Cuba and the ProCuba agency.

Tourism is an important economic engine for Mexico and Cuba, and it encourages closer ties between the two countries' businesses and companies, which was why the Mexico-Cuba tourism business forum was held in June 2016 in Merida to boost tourism between the two nations.

Mexico supports the process of updating the Cuban economic and social model by providing technical assistance, an exchange of experiences and training for the implementation of the economic reforms. For example, the Bank of Mexico and the Central Bank of Cuba signed a technical cooperation agreement in February 2016. Mexico recognizes that the updating process will result in development opportunities for the Cuban people.

In this regard, the removal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo would promote the restructuring of the Cuban economy, naturally facilitating trade and investment flows in the region, and could assist in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the full attainment of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals.

Monaco

[Original: French]
[4 April 2017]

Pursuant to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the general principles of international law, the Principality of Monaco has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Mongolia

[Original: English]
[25 May 2017]

In accordance with paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of General Assembly resolution 71/5, the Government of Mongolia has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the aforementioned resolution.

Mongolia reaffirms its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, in particular the principle of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government of Mongolia has consistently opposed the continued application of unilateral measures and reiterates its unconditional support for the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Montenegro

[Original: English]
[5 April 2017]

The Government of Montenegro supported General Assembly resolution 71/5, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The Government of Montenegro reaffirms its commitment to the purpose and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and has neither promulgated nor applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in resolution 71/5. The Government of Montenegro is ready to further develop cooperation with Cuba at both the bilateral and multilateral levels.

Morocco

[Original: French]
[24 April 2017]

The Kingdom of Morocco reiterates its firm commitment to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and the cardinal principles of international law.

The Kingdom of Morocco has always encouraged the development of friendly relations between States Members of the United Nations.

Mozambique

[Original: English]
[2 May 2017]

The Republic of Mozambique has never promulgated, applied or contributed to the application of any of the laws or regulations mentioned in General Assembly resolution 71/5. It was in this context that the Republic of Mozambique voted in favour of the aforementioned resolution.

The Republic of Mozambique unconditionally supports the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and appeals to the United Nations to ensure that all Member States take the resolution in consideration.

Myanmar

[Original: English]
[11 May 2017]

During the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, Myanmar once again joined the international community and voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5 to bring an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Myanmar believes in the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, the norms of international law and good-neighbourliness. Nations should be guided by the principles enshrined in those guidelines to coexist, respect differences, promote prosperity and ensure safety. Myanmar is encouraged by and welcomes the ongoing efforts between the United States and Cuba to normalize relations. We hope that the efforts will lead to the eventual lifting of all economic, commercial and financial embargoes imposed against Cuba.

In October 2016, 191 Member States called for an end to the blockade by voting in favour of resolution 71/5. The end of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba will benefit not only the Cuban people and the United States, but also the entire international community. For these reasons, Myanmar has joined the international community and voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5, calling for an immediate end to the embargo.

Namibia

[Original: English]
[2 May 2017]

Namibia strongly supports General Assembly resolution 71/5 and calls for an immediate and unconditional lifting of the embargo against the Republic of Cuba, in conformity with the obligations under the Charter of the United Nations. As it has done every year, Namibia supports, and will continue to support, the call by the General Assembly to remove the embargo against the people of Cuba. Namibia has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures to support such an embargo.

The Government of the Republic of Namibia upholds the principle of peaceful coexistence of nations, respects the sovereign equality of States, and believes in fair and open trade among nations. Since attaining independence, Namibia has taken steps to strengthen trade relations with Cuba, and Cuba continues to provide expertise to Namibia in the fields of health, agriculture, aquaculture and education. This is in line with a number of agreements concluded between Namibia and Cuba.

Since the previous reporting period, several high-level visits have taken place between Namibia and Cuba, in order to further cement the excellent relations between the two countries. Among others, exchanges of visits included the following:

- Visit by the President of the Republic of Namibia, Hage Geingob, by the founder, former President and Father of the Namibian Nation, Sam Nujoma, and by the former President of the Republic of Namibia, Hifikepunye Pohamba, to attend the funeral of the leader and founder of the Cuban Revolution, Fidel Castro Ruz, in Cuba, November 2016
- Official visit to Cuba by the Speaker of the National Assembly of Namibia, Peter Katjavivi, January 2016
- Official visits to Cuba by the Deputy Minister for International Relations and Cooperation of Namibia, Peya Mushelenga, and Deputy Minister of Works and Transport of Namibia, Sankwasa James Sankwasa, July 2016
- Visit to Cuba by Chief Justice Peter S. Shivute to attend the Eighth Meeting on Justice and Law. With his Cuban counterpart, Dr. Ruben Remigio Ferro, he signed a Protocol of Cooperation, and also signed a memorandum of understanding between the People's Supreme Court of the Republic of Cuba and the Supreme Court of the Republic of Namibia, to establish, consolidate and strengthen cooperation mechanisms between the judicial institutions of the two countries
- Second session of the Namibia-Cuba Joint Working Group, Havana, 6 and 7 September 2016
- Other lower-level visits and economic activities
- Namibia and Cuba have signed a number of agreements, memorandums of understanding and letters of intent during the reporting period.

In addition, the Republic of Namibia is to host the Fifth Continental African Conference on Solidarity with Cuba, from 5 to 7 June 2017.

Nauru

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

The Government of Nauru reaffirms its strong commitment to the purposes and principles embedded in the Charter of the United Nations, including in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation, as established by international law.

The Government of Nauru further reaffirms its full support for General Assembly resolution 71/5 on ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Furthermore, Nauru has not promulgated or applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between the Republic of Nauru and the Republic of Cuba.

Nepal

[Original: English]
[28 June 2017]

The Government of Nepal has firmly adhered to the provisions of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures contrary to the resolution.

New Zealand

[Original: English]
[24 May 2017]

The Government of New Zealand reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5. The Government of New Zealand has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade embargo against Cuba. We reiterate those calls. New Zealand has no trade or economic legislation or measures that restrict or discourage trade or investment to or from Cuba, and welcomes all steps towards normalization, including lifting the embargo.

Nicaragua

[Original: Spanish]
[3 May 2017]

Nicaragua reiterates its respect for the sovereign equality of States, the principles of non-intervention and non-interference in a State's internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation, as set forth in various international instruments, as well as other principles that are essential to coexistence and peace. Nicaragua also reiterates the right of every State to choose its own political, economic and social system free from outside interference, coercive economic measures, sanctions or embargoes.

We welcome the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States as a first step towards the normalization of bilateral relations.

However, there can be no full normalization without a complete end to the cruel and inhumane embargo imposed on the people and Government of Cuba for over five decades, an embargo that 191 States of the international community rejected in the General Assembly's most recent resolution on the issue, 71/5.

The Government of Nicaragua calls on the Government of the United States of America to comply with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly, especially resolution 71/5, adopted by 191 votes in favour and none against, that express the views of the international community, demanding it end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against the heroic people and Government of the sister Republic of Cuba.

Niger

[Original: French]
[16 June 2017]

The Government of the Niger is deeply committed to respecting the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, and freedom of international trade and navigation, as established in the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and has not taken any measures that run counter to the provisions of resolution 71/5.

On the contrary, the Republic of the Niger and the Republic of Cuba have maintained good relations of cooperation since the signing of a general agreement on cooperation between the two countries in 1994. Since then, the scope of this cooperation and the activities covered by it have evolved and expanded. The two countries regularly hold bilateral consultations, thereby attesting to the political will of their leaders to strengthen the ties of cooperation and solidarity between them, for the benefit of their people. In addition, the President of the Republic, Mr. Mahamadou Issoufou, conducted an official visit to Cuba in September 2014 to consolidate that cooperation.

The authorities of the Republic of the Niger also welcome and the change in the position of the United States of America with the restoration of diplomatic relations with Cuba over the past two years, as well as the progress made with regard to the dialogue and cooperation on matters of mutual interest.

The Niger welcomes that rapprochement and urges the two countries to continue to normalize their relations, following the establishment of diplomatic relations, by ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba.

However, the sad fact is that the economic, commercial and financial embargo remains in place and continues to inflict dreadful pain on the Cuban people, thereby hampering their economic development.

The Niger therefore calls for the lifting of the embargo, which represents a key prerequisite for the gradual normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba and will give meaning, depth and stability to what has already been achieved, namely the restoration of diplomatic relations and the abstention by the United States during the vote on the above-mentioned resolution.

For all the above reasons, the Republic of the Niger remains in solidarity with and provides growing support to the sister republic of Cuba, and hopes to be able to count once again on the support of the international community to secure the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo.

Nigeria

[Original: English]
[27 April 2017]

The Federal Government of Nigeria maintains friendly relations with all States and does not favour unilateral measures to settle political disputes. Consequently, the Federal Government reiterates its support for ending the embargo against Cuba.

Nigeria is optimistic that the recent normalization of relations between Cuba and the United States is a step in the right direction towards ending the embargo.

Norway

[Original: English]
[5 May 2017]

The Government of Norway reaffirms its position in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5. Norway does not promulgate or apply the laws and measures referred to in the resolution. Norway does not apply trade or economic legislation that restricts or discourages trade or investment to or from Cuba. Norway opposes the extraterritorial extension of unilateral measures against a third country.

Norway encourages the United States and Cuba to continue improving their bilateral relationship and hopes this will lead to the lifting of the embargo in the near future.

Oman

[Original: English]
[12 April 2017]

The Government of Oman is not applying any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation. The Government of Oman reaffirms as well the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba.

Pakistan

[Original: English]
[25 April 2017]

Pakistan is fully in observance of General Assembly resolution 71/5, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Panama

[Original: Spanish]
[31 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Panama, taking into consideration positive developments in economic relations and, in this framework, the conclusion of trade agreements with the Republic of Cuba that contribute to the easing of the trade, financial and economic restrictions against it, reaffirms its support for resolution 71/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

As a founding Member of the United Nations and a State that advocates peace, Panama maintains relations of friendship and cooperation with all States on the basis of inclusion and respect for the principles of justice and international law, as well as respect for the self-determination of peoples, respect for sovereignty and non-intervention in matters that lie essentially within the domestic jurisdiction of States.

As a country that promotes dialogue and the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as free trade and transparency in international commerce, the Republic of Panama has historically voted in favour of the draft resolution that supports the lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, a commitment which is renewed, in order to support an end to the embargo against that country.

The Republic of Panama reiterates its support for the elimination of the embargo, on the understanding that it would contribute to the full economic integration of the Republic of Cuba into the region, and for the preparation of a comprehensive report on the implementation of resolution 71/5.

Papua New Guinea

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Government of Papua New Guinea is firmly committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, the fundamental principles of the sovereign equality of States and respect for non-interference in the internal sovereign affairs of other Member States. Papua New Guinea is therefore opposed to extraterritorial application of laws and regulations that infringe on the sovereignty of other States Members of the United Nations.

In this spirit, Papua New Guinea continues to strengthen cordial and constructive cooperative relations with Cuba and therefore has no restrictive legislative, policy or other measures against Cuba.

Papua New Guinea further reaffirms its continued support for General Assembly resolution 71/5, which stresses the imperative to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Paraguay

[Original: Spanish]
[17 May 2017]

The Republic of Paraguay supports the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, believing that the matter leads to disputes in the field of international law and free trade.

Peru

[Original: Spanish]
[28 April 2017]

Peru remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and of international law, particularly the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs, and freedom of international trade and navigation.

Peru considers that the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, as demonstrated by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, constitutes a unilateral act contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

Since 1992, when Peru voted in favour of resolution 47/19, submitted by Cuba for adoption by the General Assembly, the Peruvian Government has successively voted in favour of all resolutions on this matter.

Peru has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or regulations that could affect the sovereignty of other States or their freedom of trade and navigation.

Peru believes that these coercive measures affect the economic growth of Cuba and restrict its social and human development. The Government of Peru expresses its profound concern about the adverse effects of these measures on the quality of life and well-being of the Cuban people, especially with regard to food supply, health and other essential services, by denying them access to private credit, food, medicine, technology and other supplies needed for the country's development.

Peru continues to promote trade and economic exchanges with Cuba and has consistently opposed the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against that country.

Similarly, Peru considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba is inconsistent with the dynamics of regional politics, which have been strengthened by Cuba joining dialogue and cooperation forums in the Americas.

Finally, it should be noted that on the occasion of the visit by the President of the Republic of Peru to Cuba, on 18 February 2016, agreements were reached on the steps to be taken for the expansion of the economic complementarity agreement between the two countries. However, they have not yet been implemented for reasons of force majeure.

Philippines

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Philippines fully supports and reiterates its commitment to adhere to General Assembly resolution 71/5. The Philippines has not imposed, and does not intend to impose, any laws, regulations or measures that are contrary to resolution 71/5.

Qatar

[Original: English]
[6 June 2017]

The position of the State of Qatar regarding this resolution remains unchanged. The State of Qatar fully supports General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

The State of Qatar firmly supports the rules and principles of international law in its foreign policy and follows a policy of full compliance with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

In this regard, the State of Qatar has not introduced or applied any laws or measures inconsistent with said resolution.

Republic of Korea

[Original: English]
[22 June 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Korea has consistently supported, since 1999, the General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic and trade embargo on Cuba. Therefore, the Republic of Korea has not applied laws nor administrative measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Republic of Moldova

[Original: English]
[4 April 2017]

The Republic of Moldova fully upholds the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and has never promulgated or applied laws and measures of the kind referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Russian Federation

[Original: Russian]
[25 May 2017]

Russia has consistently adhered to its position of principle in respect of General Assembly resolution 71/5: focusing its efforts and sharing the opinion of the overwhelming majority of members of the international community, it strongly condemns the United States embargo against Cuba and calls for its full and immediate repeal.

We consider that the maintenance of the commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States of America is an odious relic of the cold war and an egregious example of illegitimate unilateral sanctions. We continue to believe that this type of unlawful practice is a counterproductive anachronism that is not in any way justified by current realities and runs counter to the goals of progressive development of international cooperation.

Russia welcomed the decision of the United States to abstain in the vote on the draft of the aforementioned resolution on 26 October 2016, as a result of which, for the first time in a quarter of a century, not a single vote was cast against the resolution. Nonetheless, despite the clear admission by Washington itself of the short-sightedness of further attempts to isolate Havana, the blockade remains in effect, inflicting serious damage on the economy of Cuba and impeding the realization of the legitimate rights of its citizens to a dignified life, above all in socially important areas. Furthermore, the relaxation by the previous United States Administration of some aspects of the blockade has not yet come into effect or is not functioning properly, which creates serious obstacles for Cuba on the path to full integration into the global financial and economic structure and prevents it from effectively cooperating with foreign partners.

The fact that Cuba is unable to participate in the work of international credit unions and that it is excluded from the normal system of international transactions significantly obstructs Havana's access to external sources of credit and to generally accepted means of payment for imports and exports, which significantly reduces the country's purchasing power and hampers trade growth.

With regard to commodity nomenclature, the embargo imposes severe restrictions relating to complex technology systems, in which the proportion of components produced in the United States must not exceed 25 per cent. This primarily affects equipment, inter alia, for the oil industry, information and communications technology, aviation technology and high-technology medical equipment.

Another serious obstacle to the development of economic and trade relations with Cuba is the lack of free access to the investment market. Despite one-off investments by individual, mainly European, companies, the majority of countries, with an eye on the United States, still refrain from large-scale cooperation with Cuba in this area. The shortage of major systemic investment in the island's energy, transport, logistical and port infrastructure significantly holds back the development of the Cuban economy.

We trust that under the current United States Administration the process of normalizing relations between Cuba and the United States will not be placed on hold or reversed. The positive achievements of the rapprochement between Washington and Havana should be preserved and built upon so as to resolve the fundamental problems in bilateral relations on an equal footing and on the basis of mutual respect.

Rwanda

[Original: English]
[20 June 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Rwanda, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 71/5, reaffirms its support for said resolution and has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution. The Government of Rwanda stresses that there are no legal or regulatory impediments to free transit or trade between Rwanda and Cuba.

Saint Kitts and Nevis

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

Saint Kitts and Nevis highly esteems and adheres to the principles incorporated in the Charter of the United Nations and in the body of international law that regulate the relationships between States.

Saint Kitts and Nevis does not apply any laws that would have a deleterious effect on economies, restrict the free movement of international trade, or encroach on the sovereign equality of States. Saint Kitts and Nevis favours effective multilateralism, hence it continues to reject unilateral and coercive measures that are contrary to international law.

This unilateral approach has contributed to economic hardship in Cuba, threatened its sovereignty and will pose major obstacles to Cuba accomplishing the Sustainable Development Goals.

Saint Kitts and Nevis and the Republic of Cuba have had a long history of excellent relations. This relationship continues to mature through our shared dedication to regional integration and our common values.

Saint Kitts and Nevis also welcomed, and is supportive of, the steady strides that Cuba and the United States continue to make towards strengthened ties and believes that this is an opportune time to end the 57-year-old embargo.

Therefore, in the light of the above, Saint Kitts and Nevis shall continue to advocate the removal of the embargo, which could bring relief for the Government and people of the Republic of Cuba. Saint Kitts and Nevis joins the majority of countries that continue to vote in support of the resolution, which calls for an end to this unjust embargo.

The Government of Saint Kitts and Nevis reiterates its call for an end to this unilateral action and stands in solidarity with Cuba in supporting General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Saint Lucia

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

Saint Lucia remains in compliance with all relevant international legal obligations with respect to the principles of the sovereignty and equality of States. Accordingly, Saint Lucia has not promulgated any law, legislation or other measure, or taken any action inconsistent with these principles, that would contravene the exercise of sovereignty by a Member State in its lawful interests, or obstruct the freedom of commercial activity, trade or economic cooperation.

The Government of Saint Lucia continues to acknowledge the economic, educational, scientific and technical cooperation between Cuba and Saint Lucia in furtherance of socioeconomic advancement and sustainability in the spirit of South-South cooperation.

Saint Lucia reiterates its position on the extraterritorial application of national legislation and considers it to be contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among nations.

The Government of Saint Lucia has consistently supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

While far wealthier nations and institutions have looked askance at the developmental struggles of our tiny multi-island State of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines and offered only dubious prescriptions and platitudes, the Cuban people continue to roll up their sleeves and give freely of themselves in a manner that has touched the hearts and souls of the Vincentian people. No dollar amount can adequately reflect the value of this support, solidarity and partnership, for which the Cuban people have asked nothing in return. Our appreciation cannot be overstated.

By the time the President of the United States, Barack Obama, elaborated his "normalization process", most of the world had already determined that the United States policy in relation to Cuba had failed; indeed, it was viewed globally as a ridiculous anachronism, a relic of the Cold War, and an untenable, unnecessary and undesirable fissure in the hemispheric family.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines welcomed the steps taken by the Obama administration, nevertheless, the economic, commercial and financial blockade remains. Saint Vincent and the Grenadines wishes to reiterate that the economic, commercial and financial embargo constitutes the greatest obstacle to developing the full potential of the Cuban economy and the well-being of its people.

Despite the steps taken by the former United States administration, the sanctions against the Cuban Government and its people were renewed in 2015 under the Trading with the Enemy Act of 1917, constituting the foundation for the laws and regulations that make up the blockade, alleging foreign policy interests. This policy has continued to be strengthened in its financial and extraterritorial dimensions, illustrated by the imposition of million-dollar fines against banks and financial institutions for having relations with Cuba and in the persecution of Cuban international financial transactions.

Opposition to this inhumane policy is now almost universal in nature. We know that citizens across the United States have joined the international community by increasingly voicing their disapproval and calling for the lifting of the unilateral sanctions. In 2015, the international community adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development which sets goals to guide the creation of the future we want and which seeks to leave no one behind. Yet, this blockade, if it remains in place, works contrary to the letter and spirit of the implementation process of the Sustainable Development Goals.

Thus, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to believe that this blockade is morally unsustainable. Lifting the embargo is, therefore, a matter of moral rectitude and the well-being of approximately 12 million Cubans depends on it.

Saint Vincent and the Grenadines continues to enthusiastically call for change.

Samoa

[Original: English]
[23 June 2017]

The Government of the Independent State of Samoa reaffirms its full commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, including, in particular, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation, which also form the fundamental principles of international law.

In line with the above principles, and in conformity with international law, Samoa states that it has neither promulgated nor applied any laws or measures mentioned in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Samoa has consistently supported the relevant General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba and will continue to do so with the hope that this unilateral imposition by the United States will be brought to a rapid end.

San Marino

[Original: English]
[18 April 2017]

The Republic of San Marino has always generally been against any imposition of any embargo and is therefore against the imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba as a means of pressure and because of the serious repercussions on the population.

Sao Tome and Principe

[Original: English]
[18 April 2017]

The Government of the Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe affirms the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, multilateralism in international relations, the fundamental principle of free trade and other international legal instruments. The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe condemns any unilateral decision that seeks to restrict economic, commercial and financial activities, thereby impeding social and human development. The embargo has a direct impact on the Cuban people, and especially on the most vulnerable sectors of society, and is affecting Cuba's economic growth.

The Democratic Republic of Sao Tome and Principe has excellent relations of cooperation and friendship with Cuba and has always voted in favour of the resolutions against the embargo. It once again renews its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5.

The Republic of Sao Tome and Principe welcomed the announcement by the United States and Cuba on 17 December 2014 of their intentions of diplomatic rapprochement, which led to the opening of embassies in the two capitals.

Thus, the recent visit made to Cuba by the President of the United States, Barack Obama, gave a clear sign of the intentions of the two Governments, which need to resolve the remaining differences in a climate of peaceful coexistence and good-neighbourliness, thus seeking solutions to improve their bilateral relations in order to strengthen cooperation and lasting peace.

Saudi Arabia

[Original: English]
[8 May 2017]

Saudi Arabia enjoys normal diplomatic and trade relations with the Republic of Cuba.

Saudi Arabia has not applied laws or measures against Cuba that would prohibit economic, commercial or financial relations between Saudi Arabia and the Republic of Cuba.

In this context, Saudi Arabia is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and recalls and affirms its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Senegal

[Original: French]
[8 June 2017]

Senegal remains committed to the principles and purposes of the United Nations. As in the past, it is in compliance with the provisions of resolution 71/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016.

Serbia

[Original: English]
[12 April 2017]

The Republic of Serbia, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and reaffirming its commitment to the rules and principles of international law, fully implements General Assembly resolution 71/5 and has never promulgated or applied any laws or measures or acts of the kind referred to in the preamble to the resolution.

The Republic of Serbia has consistently supported the aforementioned resolution in the General Assembly and voted in its favour.

The Republic of Serbia calls for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, expressing the desire of the overwhelming majority of the States Members of the United Nations.

Seychelles

[Original: English]
[10 April 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Seychelles once again fully endorses the content of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, adopted on 26 October 2016.

Seychelles pursues a policy of full respect for international laws and is committed to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular, the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in the internal matters of other States.

The Government of Seychelles continues to reject the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, and calls upon States to refrain from promulgating and applying such laws and measures as they affect the sovereignty of other States, the legitimate interests of the entities under their jurisdiction and the freedom of trade and navigation.

That being said, the Government of Seychelles has welcomed attempts by the United States and Cuba to normalize the relations between the two countries. Seychelles has always been of the view that the strained relationship between the United States and Cuba has not been conducive to the sustainable development of the people of the United States nor of Cuba.

In this context, Seychelles therefore urges the expeditious removal of the current embargo facing the Republic of Cuba, which we believe will have a tremendous positive impact on the lives of the people of Cuba.

The Government of Seychelles will continue to consistently support the annual resolution on this item and continuously votes in favour of this resolution in the General Assembly.

Sierra Leone

[Original: English]
[21 June 2017]

The Government of Sierra Leone reiterates the need for the total elimination of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba which continues to adversely affect the well-being of the Cuban people. Sierra Leone therefore reaffirms its full and unequivocal support for General Assembly resolution 71/5, which calls for an end to the unilateral economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

Singapore

[Original: English]
[18 April 2017]

The Government of Singapore reaffirms its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5. Singapore has consistently supported resolutions calling for an end to the United States trade embargo on Cuba since 1995 and has voted in their favour.

Solomon Islands

[Original: English]
[28 June 2017]

Solomon Islands, in its support for General Assembly resolution 71/5, calls for the unconditional lifting of the 1962 economic and financial blockade on Cuba by the Government of the United States in accordance with the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations.

Solomon Islands welcomes the growing engagements between the United States and Cuba and hopes legislative action by the Congress of the United States will lift in totality the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States on Cuba.

Solomon Islands acknowledges the spirit, resilience and generosity of the Government and people of Cuba in educating, sheltering and clothing children from a multitude of States who are studying there despite the imposed hardship.

Somalia

[Original: English]
[7 June 2017]

Somalia has no laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5, in conformity with obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

South Africa

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Republic of South Africa urges the current President of the United States to carry forward the historic rapprochement between the United States and Cuba, and urges as well the Congress of United States to take the necessary measures for the immediate and complete removal of the economic, commercial and financial embargo that defies the principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Republic of South Africa is of the firm view that the unilateral and illegal total blockade of Cuba by the United States is one of the biggest impediments to improved bilateral trade between South Africa and Cuba, as the extraterritorial application of the sanctions on third countries has prevented South African businesses from pursuing trade and investment opportunities with Cuba. We would like to request third-party countries to support Cuba and its people by scrapping any domestic laws or regulations that continue to hamper the development of Cuba and its people. The relaxation of restrictions on financial transactions in United States dollars between the United States of America and Cuba is welcomed, but in order for bilateral and commercial relations between the two countries to be tangible and meaningful, there should be a further relaxation of licensing conditions to cover a much wider area of transactions.

Further, Cuba continues to be a beacon of hope for many developing countries and plays its part in making this world a better place for all humanity. However, for Cuba, the embargo remains the most significant obstacle in its quest to realize its development objectives, including the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The South African Government joins the international community in condemning this unilateral action and calls upon the United States of America to initiate measures to immediately repeal these inhumane actions designed to illicitly punish a nation. Such actions are contrary to the principles, purpose and spirit of the Charter, especially the principle of the sovereign equality of States and non-intervention in the domestic affairs of Member States. The severe economic and financial restrictions that stifle the economic and social development of Cuba and that further exacerbate hardship and the suffering of the Cuban people are not acceptable.

South Africa and the overwhelming majority of the international community have for 25 consecutive years supported the annual resolutions of the General Assembly calling for the immediate lifting of the economic blockade unilaterally imposed by the United States on Cuba.

The Government of South Africa further urges the President of the United States to take all the necessary measures within his wide executive powers to deal with all outstanding issues regarding the embargo.

South Africa takes this opportunity to appeal once again to the international community to redouble its efforts to promote a constructive and transparent dialogue between the two countries, with a view to achieving the objectives of all the resolutions already adopted by the United Nations on the matter and to ensure the sustainable further progress of the people of Cuba.

South Sudan

[Original: English]
[30 June 2017]

The Republic of South Sudan reiterates its profound concern at the continuation of the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. In line with the majority of States Members of the United Nations and African Union resolutions Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XVII), Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XIX) and Assembly/AU/Res.1 (XXI), the Republic of South Sudan calls for the lifting of the embargo endured by the Cuban people for over half a century. The Republic of South Sudan considers that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba is a unilateral act contrary to the principles of international law enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and the basic principles of the multilateral trading system. The Republic of South Sudan considers that these coercive measures are affecting Cuba's economic growth and impeding its social and human development. In this regard, the Republic of South Sudan urges the implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/5 to end the blockade on Cuba.

Sri Lanka

[Original: English]
[17 April 2017]

Sri Lanka does not approve of the use of unilateral economic measures, against any country, that are inconsistent with the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law. Sri Lanka is of the view that the implementation of such measures impedes the rule of law, the transparency of international trade and the freedom of trade and navigation.

Sri Lanka has not promulgated any laws and measures referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Sri Lanka has continuously supported the adoption of the resolutions on this item at the General Assembly and has taken the position that the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba needs to end.

Sudan

[Original: English]
[1 June 2017]

General Assembly resolution 71/5 is a very important resolution which the Sudan, in its statement before the General Assembly, had fully supported, calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed by the United States against Cuba.

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of the Sudan and Cuba were established in 1969. 2016 marked the forty-seventh anniversary of the bilateral relations between both countries. An advanced step in bilateral relations between the two countries was taken when the Ambassador of the Republic of the Sudan in Venezuela was accredited as Ambassador to Cuba in March 2014. Furthermore, the bilateral relations between the two countries have been strengthened by visits by senior officials to both countries.

The Government of the Republic of the Sudan pursues a policy of full respect of international law and the principles and purpose of the Charter of the United

Nations, the sovereign equality of States, and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. Consistent with its principled stand, the Sudan opposes the imposition of sanctions on developing countries because of their devastating impact on the efforts of those countries to achieve sustainable development and because they constitute a violation of the Charter. To that effect, the Sudan participates every year in the debate of the General Assembly on the agenda item and votes with the majority of Member States, in favour of Assembly resolutions prohibiting the imposition of such unilateral measures and sanctions. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan reaffirms that it does not promulgate or apply any laws or measures that could, by being applied outside its own national borders, affect the sovereignty of any State. The Government of the Republic of the Sudan calls for the repeal of laws that impose such measures.

On the basis of the foregoing, the Sudan opposes the economic and commercial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba, which has caused great damage and suffering to the Cuban people and violated its legitimate rights and interests, being a flagrant violation of international law and the Charter and showing disregard for their lofty and noble principles.

The Sudan itself continues to suffer from the unilateral economic, financial and commercial sanctions imposed by the United States of America since November 1997. Such unilateral sanctions and coercive measures are in violation of the legitimate right of the Sudan and Cuba and all developing countries and their people to choose their own political, economic and social system that fully responds to their aspirations.

Since the adoption of General Assembly resolution 71/5, the Government of the Republic of the Sudan has put the issue before the concerned multilateral organs with a view to mobilizing support for the elimination of all forms of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries. The Republic of the Sudan also commends the initiative of the modernization of the social and economic model, presented by Cuba.

Suriname

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

The Republic of Suriname remains firmly committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as well as upholding the principles of international law. Suriname is of the considered view that sovereign equality, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States and other relevant norms governing international relations should be respected at all times.

Suriname therefore views the commercial, economic and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States as contrary to those principles and norms and counterproductive in trade relations.

Suriname expresses, once again, its continued solidarity with the Government and people of Cuba and places on record that the Government of the Republic of Suriname has never promulgated or applied laws and measures affecting the economic, commercial and financial rights of the people and Government of Cuba, as referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Suriname welcomes and supports the rapprochement between the United States and Cuba.

Swaziland

[Original: English]
[12 June 2017]

The Kingdom of Swaziland continues to applaud the steps taken by the United States of America and Cuba in 2016 towards normalization and re-establishment of the much-needed invaluable bilateral relations between the two countries.

The embargo has caused huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba as well as undermining the legitimate economic interests of third countries. It should be noted that ending the blockade will be in line with the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of international law, human rights and international humanitarian law as well as several global agendas adopted by the Heads of State aimed at ensuring that no country is left behind and at the attainment of sustainable development and poverty eradication.

To this end, the Kingdom of Swaziland is in full support of all efforts and engagements that the two countries continue to undertake in a bid to end the blockade against Cuba, an act that is imperative to the development of both countries. It is the Kingdom's fervent hope that the United States of America will positively respond to the international community's legitimate demand that the blockade be completely lifted so that Cuba may also enjoy all the freedoms, rights and privileges enjoyed by all sovereign nation States without any hindrance.

Switzerland

[Original: French]
[26 May 2017]

As in previous years, Switzerland also expressed its support for the resolution in question during the 2016 session of the General Assembly. Switzerland and the Republic of Cuba have a close and long-standing relationship: when Cuba became an independent republic in 1902, Switzerland and Cuba established diplomatic and consular relations, which were particularly strong during the period when Switzerland served as the protecting power representing Cuban and United States interests (1991-2015). Today, the relations remain good and Switzerland continues to support Cuba through its development cooperation programme.

In that context, while welcoming the recent rapprochement between the United States and the Republic of Cuba, Switzerland considers that the economic, financial and commercial measures taken against the Republic of Cuba have negative repercussions on the living conditions of the Cuban people and increase their economic difficulties. For these reasons, they should be repealed. Switzerland will continue to make its good offices available during the normalization process, if so desired.

Syrian Arab Republic

[Original: Arabic]
[4 May 2017]

The Syrian Arab Republic reaffirms that it unequivocally condemns and utterly rejects the continued imposition by the United States of America of unilateral coercive economic, commercial and financial measures against Cuba and its people. Such measures are illegal and contravene the relevant United Nations resolutions, the most recent of which is General Assembly resolution 71/5 of 26 October 2016 entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba". They furthermore contravene General Assembly resolution 70/185 of 22 December 2015 entitled "Unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against developing countries".

The Syrian Arab Republic draws attention to the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Cooperation among States in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, which provides that no State may use or encourage the use of unilateral economic, political or any other type of measures to coerce another State in order to obtain from it the subordination of the exercise of its sovereign rights. It also draws attention to the general principles governing the international trading system and trade policies for development contained in the relevant resolutions, rules and provisions of the United Nations and the World Trade Organization.

The Syrian Arab Republic rejects, as a matter of principle, the imposition by States or regional or subregional groups of any unilateral measures, whether economic, commercial or financial, in order to coerce developing States politically and economically, and to force developing States to adhere to their policies and serve their interests. Unilateral measures are a means of terrorizing States politically and imposing collective punishment on their peoples. They also undermine the United Nations system and encroach on its authority, and hamper international trade and the full implementation of human rights instruments.

Unilateral coercive economic measures are founded on the immoral notion that States and international Powers that are economically influential and financially capable are entitled to use unilateral economic measures as a means of achieving goals and implementing unjust political agendas, particularly with respect to developing countries. Such a notion runs counter to human rights principles and international humanitarian law.

No one can therefore speak of achieving the sustainable development aims and goals of the 2030 Agenda as long as certain States and economic and geographical groups, the most prominent of which are the United States of America and the European Union, continue to impose coercive measures on many peoples of the world.

The Syrian Arab Republic and the vast majority of Member States welcomed the changes in United States policy towards Cuba, the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries and the recognition by the former President of the United States that the embargo is outdated and should be abolished. However, the Government of the friendly State of Cuba has stressed and proven with evidence and documentation that the American economic, commercial and financial embargo remains in place and continues to harm the Cuban people and impede the country's economic development. Moreover, the implementing regulations and laws that perpetuate the American embargo of Cuba are still in force and being strictly enforced by American Government organs and agencies. What is even worse, the United States continues to make no bones about its intentions to interfere in the internal affairs of Cuba and force political changes in the country by applying economic, political, social and media pressure against Cuba.

The Syrian Arab Republic calls for the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba to be eliminated in all its forms and for the unilateral measures imposed by the United States, the European Union and other States on a number of countries, including the Syrian Arab Republic, to be brought to an end.

The Syrian Arab Republic continues to be the target of a number coercive economic measures that have been unilaterally imposed by the United States, the

European Union, the League of Arab States and a number of other States, including Britain, Canada and Australia. These hostile coercive measures have had a calamitous effect on the Syrian people and caused them as much suffering as the acts of terrorism that have been committed by the terrorist organizations Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant, the Nusrah Front and associated individuals and entities, which are supported and funded by some of the States that are imposing coercive measures against the Syrian people. These illegal coercive measures prevent the Syrian people from meeting their basic needs and accessing essential services such as nutrition, medications, education, medical supplies, fuel, and agricultural and industrial items, as well as spare parts for civil aviation and telecommunications equipment. These measures also prevent the Syrian Government and private sector from cooperating or working with a third party, and they prevent any private establishment or foreign entity from entering into a contract with the Syrian Government out of fear that it might be slapped with financial and banking penalties and blacklisted by the States that have imposed the unilateral measures. These unjust measures impede the importation of the most basic needs of Syrians and prevent Syria from concluding maintenance and repair contracts. In the future, they will impede our ability to execute reconstruction and infrastructure rehabilitation projects and to achieve the sustainable development goals and objectives related to economic and social development.

In paragraph 2 of its resolution 70/185, the General Assembly urged the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries that are not authorized by relevant organs of the United Nations or are inconsistent with the principles of international law as set forth in the Charter of the United Nations and that contravene the basic principles of the multilateral trading system.

However, the legal and ethical problem for which the United Nations now bears primary responsibility to provide a real solution is the lack of effective, preventive international legal mechanisms that can be used to end or challenge the legitimacy of such unilateral actions, or to ensure compensation for the damage caused thereby. Unilateral coercive measures will therefore continue to reflect the grim international reality that wealthy States and economic and geographical groups are able to exert their influence on or exercise hegemony over developing States. Despite their importance, the annual resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and the annual reports of the Secretary-General will not remedy the injustices that befall the peoples, States, individuals and institutions that are victims of such illegal unilateral actions.

The time has come to put an end to such immoral and contradictory practices. It is no longer appropriate for the Governments of the United States of America, the States of the European Union and certain other States to use United Nations forums to give speeches and pontificate about human rights and sustainable development while at the same time they pursue a policy of using their economic and financial might to subjugate peoples and exploit their economic, humanitarian and social conditions, and to interfere in the internal affairs of other States with a view to dominating or destroying them.

Tajikistan

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Government of Tajikistan reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Tajikistan is committed to the principles of international law and supports the fundamental rights of nations to freely choose their own ways of development. Taking into account, among other principles, the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade, Tajikistan believes that such economic, commercial and financial measures against Cuba continue to adversely affect the living conditions and human rights of the Cuban people and hamper the efforts of the Government of Cuba to achieve internationally agreed development goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals.

Furthermore, given that the international community is facing major challenges, such as the global financial and economic crisis and the resulting increase in poverty, unemployment and malnutrition, the imposition of embargoes and sanctions will be more unjustifiable than ever and deserves appropriate reactions at the global level.

Such actions are contrary to the principles of international law, the sovereign equality of States, non-interference in the internal affairs of States and peaceful coexistence among States.

Tajikistan welcomes the resumption of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America and hopes that the steps taken by the United States to ease the blockade will further contribute to the development of Cuba.

Tajikistan enjoys friendly diplomatic and economic relations with Cuba. Tajikistan will continue to undertake further measures to strengthen cooperation between the two countries.

Thailand

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

Since 1994, the Royal Thai Government has consistently supported General Assembly resolutions calling for an end to the trade and economic embargo against Cuba.

Thailand opposes the imposition by one country of its national law on another country which, in effect, compels a third party to comply with it. Such an act would be contrary to the fundamental principles of international law and the Charter of the United Nations.

The imposition of the unilateral embargo against Cuba has undermined the socioeconomic development of the country and caused the suffering of its people.

Thailand has maintained neither legal provisions nor domestic measures of such nature and continues to discourage them.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia

[Original: English]
[16 May 2017]

The Republic of Macedonia has neither applied nor promulgated any unilateral sanctions or embargo and reiterates that it fully implements General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Timor-Leste

[Original: English]
[25 May 2017]

The Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

In this regard, the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and reiterates that it has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures referred to therein.

The Government of Timor-Leste is opposed to the continued adoption and application of such extraterritorial measures and supports the immediate and unconditional lifting of the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba.

Togo

[Original: French]
[30 June 2017]

In keeping with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, Togo has always striven to promote respect for the sovereign equality and territorial integrity of States and for non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs. Likewise, it supports unreservedly the principle of freedom of trade and navigation, which is enshrined in numerous international legal instruments.

Consequently, Togo systematically rejects the use of any unilateral measures to exert pressure on States.

For this reason, it has never promulgated or applied any laws or regulations that curtail the sovereignty of other States or the legitimate interests of entities or individuals under their jurisdiction.

The Government of Togo has always supported the steps taken by the Cuban Government to end the embargo imposed against Cuba by the United States of America. Ending the embargo has become an urgent necessity, as it would contribute to further advances towards the restoration of economic and trade relations between the two countries, a goal that the Togolese Republic wholeheartedly supports. Togo also hopes that the rapprochement that began with the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two States will continue.

Tonga

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Kingdom of Tonga adheres fully to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and accepted under international law, in particular, the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

Thus, the Kingdom of Tonga has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5. The Kingdom of Tonga maintains friendly and diplomatic relations with Cuba.

Trinidad and Tobago

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago remains fully committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and, in particular, to the principles of the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation.

The Government remains steadfast in its view that discriminatory trade practices and the extraterritorial application of domestic laws are inconsistent with the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and in international law. Accordingly, in conformity with its obligations under the Charter and international law, Trinidad and Tobago does not apply unilateral economic measures as a means of political and economic coercion against other States.

The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago maintains a multifaceted relationship with the Republic of Cuba, an important dimension of which is economic in nature, since 1972, when diplomatic relations were established. Trinidad and Tobago consistently supports subregional, regional and international efforts to promote constructive dialogue to bring about the cessation, sooner rather than later, of the economic, commercial and financial embargo in place against Cuba, which significantly challenges the achievement of sustainable development in that country.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore welcomes, with enthusiasm, the reopening of direct and frank dialogue between Cuba and an influential and respected member of the international community. We are encouraged, in particular, by the recently concluded summit between the two countries and the ensuing open dialogue on several issues, including those on which they maintain divergent views and policies. While expressing its congratulations to both sides in support of the process they have launched to build a mature and open bilateral relationship, based on mutual respect and sovereign equality, Trinidad and Tobago reaffirms its position that the full achievement of such a relationship will continue to be elusive without the lifting of the embargo. This crucial goal must be a priority for both Governments and peoples.

Trinidad and Tobago therefore renews, with fervour, its long-standing call for the full reintegration of Cuba into the international system.

Tunisia

[Original: French]
[15 May 2017]

Tunisia reaffirms its commitment to the principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

In that context, Tunisia supported resolution 71/5 and all of the previous General Assembly resolutions calling for the lifting of the embargo imposed on Cuba.

Tunisia does not apply unilateral any laws or measures with extraterritorial effects. It therefore has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures against Cuba prohibiting economic, commercial or financial relations between the two countries.

Turkey

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The Republic of Turkey does not have any laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5. Turkey expresses concern about such measures, which adversely affect the living standards of people, and reaffirms its adherence to the principles of freedom of trade and navigation in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations and international law. The Government of Turkey maintains its stance that differences and problems between States should be settled through dialogue and negotiations.

Turkmenistan

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

The Government of Turkmenistan once again reaffirms its position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5.

Turkmenistan considers that the use of economic measures as a means of exerting political and economic pressure contravenes the basic principles of international law and the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations and other fundamental international legal instruments.

The unilateral embargo against the Republic of Cuba holds back the development of the Cuban economy and creates a big obstacle to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The relevant United Nations agencies should take appropriate steps to prevent the use by individual States of economic sanctions and unilateral coercive measures against other independent States, including Cuba.

Tuvalu

[Original: English]
[27 April 2017]

Tuvalu fully supports and promotes the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, which calls for solidarity, cooperation and friendly relations and fair trade practices among all nations. Therefore, the Government of Tuvalu fully supports the lifting of the economic, commercial, immigration and financial embargo against Cuba. The Government and people of Cuba should be empowered and not constrained in pursuing and achieving their sustainable development goals.

The current positive advances in mending the relations between the United States and the Republic of Cuba are honourable and correspond to the Charter, pertaining to the principles of sovereignty and equality among all nations and people. Tuvalu appreciates very much Cuba's scholarships to Tuvalu for our medical students.

Uganda

[Original: English]
[27 June 2017]

Uganda has normal trading relations with Cuba and does not honour the embargo.

United Arab Emirates

[Original: English]
[5 May 2017]

The United Arab Emirates voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5, which was adopted by 191 votes.

The United Arab Emirates acts in accordance with its obligations under the principles and goals of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and emphasizes that all States should enjoy full freedom of trade and navigation in all international sea lanes in accordance with international law, and therefore, the United Arab Emirates does not apply any economic, commercial or financial embargo on Cuba. Furthermore, the United Arab Emirates does not permit the application of such measures outside the context of international legitimacy.

United Republic of Tanzania

[Original: English]
[27 June 2017]

The United Republic of Tanzania fully supports and reaffirms its commitment to adhere to General Assembly resolution 71/5. Ending the unilateral economic, commercial and financial embargo by the United States against Cuba is the unanimous call of the international community.

The United Republic of Tanzania reiterates its commitment to the Charter of the United Nations, international law and multilateralism, and thus remains opposed to the economic and commercial embargo imposed against Cuba.

Uruguay

[Original: Spanish]
[25 May 2017]

In connection with resolution 71/5 of the General Assembly, and in particular paragraph 4 thereof, the Eastern Republic of Uruguay has always strictly respected and observed the principles of international law and all the norms set forth in the Charter of the United Nations.

Taking into account also that the London Naval Conference of 1909 stipulates that embargoes are an act of war, we believe that decades after the end of the cold war and in the current context, there is no justification for the continuation of measures such as the economic and trade blockade or embargo.

Accordingly, Uruguay has not promulgated or applied any provisions affecting the sovereign equality or decisions of other States, and respects the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of another State.

In addition, Uruguay has strongly condemned any theory that supports or justifies the extraterritorial application of domestic laws, except those that form part of international law, primarily in relation to protective jurisdiction and universal jurisdiction.

Uruguay rejects any direct or indirect means constituting unilateral action by one State to impose sanctions for sovereign decisions taken by another State in the political, economic, commercial, social, cultural or other arena.

In view of the above, Uruguay believes that the sanctions imposed and the extraterritorial laws enacted against Cuba not only are a violation of international law, but also have caused untold harm to Cuban economic development, constitute a form of deprivation of the right to development and have inflicted incalculable damage on the dignity and sovereignty of the Cuban people.

The restoration of diplomatic relations and the new rounds of negotiations between Cuba and the United States are a first step towards normalizing relations between the two countries and represent significant progress towards regional stability in Latin America.

In that regard, Uruguay encourages the Government of the United States to terminate the embargo. Moreover, until such termination, it urges the United States to substantially reduce its implementation.

Uruguay calls for continued dialogue and for further progress in the negotiations aimed at resolving this unjust situation, as set out in General Assembly resolution 71/5, which reiterates the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Uzbekistan

[Original: Russian]
[17 May 2017]

The Republic of Uzbekistan supports resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba and reiterates its commitment to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law.

Uzbekistan fully complies with the provisions of the resolution and has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in its preamble.

Vanuatu

[Original: English]
[1 June 2017]

The Government and people of the Republic of Vanuatu remain firmly committed to the purposes and principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and respecting and upholding the principles of international law, especially as they relate to maintaining and strengthening international peace and security, promoting the economic and social advancement of all peoples, reaffirming faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, promoting the freedom of international trade and navigation and promoting the practice of tolerance and living together in peace with one another as good neighbours.

Vanuatu remains concerned that despite numerous resolutions adopted by the General Assembly requesting the United States to end the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba, the embargo remains in place. Vanuatu welcomes the normalization process of bilateral relations between Cuba and the United States of America, initiated in 2014 through the reopening of direct dialogue between the two countries, but remains convinced that the full normalization of relations cannot be fully restored without the lifting of the embargo.

Vanuatu does not apply unilateral laws or measures with extraterritorial effects. It therefore has not promulgated or applied any laws or measures against

Cuba prohibiting economic, commercial or financial relations between the two countries.

Venezuela (Bolivarian Republic of)

[Original: Spanish]
[1 May 2017]

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela condemns and rejects the application of unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects that violate the sovereign rights and political independence of other States or the human rights of their citizens. Venezuela supports this position in the light of adherence to the tenets and values expressed in the Constitution; these include humanism, cooperation, solidarity among peoples and staunch pacifism guided by unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law.

In that connection, the Venezuelan Government considers that the application of such measures by the United States of America against the Republic of Cuba is contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and other international legal instruments and, in addition, violates the freedom of trade and navigation and the norms of the international trading system. Furthermore, Venezuela reaffirms its condemnation of the application of the extraterritorial provisions of the Torricelli Act (Cuban Democracy Act) and the Helms-Burton Act (Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity Act), which have caused serious additional harm to the economy of the Republic of Cuba for some 20 years, both in terms of its economic relations with third countries and with the subsidiaries of United States companies.

Venezuela has strongly supported the 25 resolutions on this subject that have been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the General Assembly since 1991, as well as the declarations repudiating this type of hostile action, which undermines peaceful coexistence between nations and international legality, that have been made in other political forums.

The Bolivarian Government therefore reiterates its appeal to the President of the United States of America, Donald Trump, for his Government to put an end to the merciless economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against the fraternal people of Cuba for more than five decades. A favourable response to this international appeal would demonstrate that country's commitment to international law, and its respect for the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations.

Despite the great importance of the resumption of bilateral relations between the United States of America and Cuba since December 2014, one particular highlight of which was the visit of the then President Barack Obama to Havana in March 2016, the Government of Venezuela wishes to stress its concern about the limited progress — particularly during 2016 and 2017 — towards the lifting of the United States embargo and unilateral measures against Cuba. Venezuela believes that President Donald Trump can do a great deal to lift the cruel measure and have a sizeable and meaningful impact on the harmful effects of the embargo that his country had ruthlessly imposed on generations of Cubans.

The policy of confrontation that has been promoted and implemented by the United States of America for decades has affected the well-being of the Latin American and Caribbean sister nation, whose human rights have been violated as a result of the implementation of these illegal measures. In this regard, the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela urges the United States of America to comply immediately with General Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54,21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, 70/5 and 71/5, whose adoptions have been marked by historical majority votes within the United Nations.

Indeed, while reiterating its condemnation of the continuation of this anachronistic and internationally illegal measure, the Government of Venezuela stresses that such actions in no way foster the climate of dialogue and cooperation that must prevail in international relations among sovereign, independent States in conformity with the spirit and purpose of the Charter of the United Nations and with General Assembly resolution 2625 (XXV) on the Declaration on Principles of International Law concerning Friendly Relations and Co-operation among States, adopted on 24 October 1970.

One example of the harmful effects of the continued and unchanged application of the embargo is contained in the 2016 report (A/71/91), wherein the World Food Programme (WFP) notes the following:

> "Throughout 2015 the embargo continued to have a negative impact on the Cuban economy, as well as on the operational conditions of WFP. The high cost of importing agricultural equipment or inputs is a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, and has an impact on the country's ability to produce all its food requirements. As a result, the Government needs to import a significant proportion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety net programmes. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and imposes challenges to food security in Cuba."

Furthermore, according to the World Health Organization and the Pan American Health Organization in the 2016 report (A/71/91), "for the period April 2015-March 2016, the economic impact on the health sector is estimated to have exceeded $82 million, with a cumulative impact of over 2.6 billion United States dollars from the beginning of the embargo to date."

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela endorses the repeated declarations made by, inter alia, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, at its seventeenth Summit, held on Margarita Island in September 2016, the twenty-fifth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government, the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, and the Seventh Summit of the Association of Caribbean States, in repudiation of the application of unilateral measures with extraterritorial effects, which it considers to be contrary to dialogue and cooperation as genuine expressions of inclusive and transparent multilateralism.

It also wishes to draw attention to the Political Declaration of Punta Cana, adopted at the Fifth Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in Punta Cana, Dominican Republic, on 25 January 2017, in which those leaders stated the following:

> "We welcome the progress in the relations between the Governments of Cuba and the United States of America and, in that context, the visit of the President of the United States, Mr. Barack Obama, to Cuba in March 2016. We reaffirm our call to the United States Government to unconditionally put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade it has imposed on that sister nation for more than five decades and is still in force. We urge the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially change the application of the blockade."

Venezuela is convinced that the international community must continue to demand an end to the practice of applying unilateral coercive measures that seek to curtail the sovereign right of States to determine, in keeping with the right of self-determination, their political and social model, in line with the situations and particularities of their respective countries and peoples. It considers that peoples should under no circumstances be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development.

Lastly, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela renews its firm commitment to unconditional respect for the norms and principles of international law and therefore appeals again to the Government of the United States of America to comply with the 25 resolutions adopted by the General Assembly and to end the merciless and criminal economic, commercial and financial embargo which it has illegally maintained against Cuba for more than 50 years.

Viet Nam

[Original: English]
[9 May 2017]

The United States policy in respect of the blockade and embargo against the Republic of Cuba over the past many decades represents a violation of international laws in general and free trade law in particular and an infringement of the fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations, contravening the common desire of nations in the world to build sound and equal international relations, regardless of political system, and with respect for each nation's right to choose its own path of development.

The General Assembly has for many consecutive years adopted, with an overwhelming majority, resolutions demanding that the United States end its economic, trade and financial blockade and embargo policies and laws against Cuba, the most recent of which is resolution 71/5, which was adopted on 26 October 2016 by 191 votes in favour.

Viet Nam reaffirms its strong support for the related General Assembly resolutions and believes that the United Nations will soon produce concrete initiatives and measures to rapidly implement the adopted resolutions in order to put an immediate end to the blockade and embargo against Cuba.

It is the view of Viet Nam that the United States and the Republic of Cuba should maintain dialogue and negotiation to strengthen the relationship between the two countries, based on the spirit of mutual respect, respect for each other's independence and sovereignty, and non-interference in the other's internal affairs. It is our wish that the United States would put an early and complete end to the blockade and embargo against Cuba. This will serve legitimate interests for the people of Cuba and the United States and significantly contribute to the maintenance of peace and stability, as well as the enhancement of cooperation in the Americas and the world.

Once again, Viet Nam confirms its friendship, cooperation and solidarity with the Cuban people and resolves to do its utmost with other peace-, freedom- and justice-loving peoples in the world to help the Cuban people overcome the consequences of the above-mentioned immoral and illegal blockade and embargo policy.

Yemen

[Original: English]
[8 May 2017]

The Government of the Republic of Yemen reasserts its strong belief in the principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of international law relating to national sovereignty, non-aggression, non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, mutual respect, peaceful coexistence and the settling of disputes between States by peaceful means.

The Government of Yemen supports the efforts of the Secretary-General to create effective means of implementing resolution 71/5, aimed at the adoption by the international community of effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral economic measures as a means of economic and political coercion against developing countries.

It should be noted that for some 37 years, the Republic of Yemen has enjoyed outstanding diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba in the economic, social and cultural spheres. Yemen has consistently sought to develop and strengthen those relations in the joint interests of both countries and peoples. Yemen has concluded several bilateral cooperation agreements with the fraternal Republic of Cuba regarding diplomatic, economic, cultural and medical matters. As a result of those agreements, Cuban citizens have been sent to Yemen and educational missions have gone to Cuba, and there has been active cooperation in a number of areas.

Zambia

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

Zambia voted in favour of General Assembly resolution 71/5 and so reaffirms its commitment to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures in conformity with its obligations under the Charter of the United Nations and international law, which, inter alia, reaffirm the freedom of trade and navigation.

Zambia welcomes the efforts over the past year by the Government of the United States to ease the embargo against Cuba, and notes the positive measures that have been undertaken in lifting the economic embargo. We continue to call for the Government of the United States and its Congress to make further efforts to lift the embargo which continues to hinder shipping, trade and tourism among other things. We trust that the United States will make further progress in this direction given the positive change from its traditional voting pattern on this agenda item, as shown at the seventy-first session of the General Assembly.

The report of the Secretary-General vindicates the position consistently held by the General Assembly over the years, that the embargo against Cuba hurts innocent people, particularly the most vulnerable who are women and children.

Despite the hardship caused by the sanctions, Zambia notes that the Cuban people remained united in defence of their country's sovereignty, welfare and dignity for which they have sacrificed so dearly.

Zimbabwe

[Original: English]
[10 May 2017]

The economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed against Cuba by the United States of America continues to be a heavy burden on the people of Cuba as it has inflicted grave human suffering. The blockade also remains the single biggest obstacle to the functioning and potential of the Cuban economy. The blockade is contrary to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular the principles of the sovereign equality of States and non-interference in each other's domestic affairs. The economic blockade against Cuba is contrary to accepted international trade regulations and practices.

Zimbabwe joins other Member States in rejecting the promulgation and application of national laws with extraterritorial impact and all other coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions which are targeted mainly at developing countries that seek to reassert their sovereignty and chart their own development course.

While there were some positive modifications of the application of certain aspects of the blockade under the former President of the United States, Barack Obama, those modifications had a very limited scope. Despite the modifications, Cuba's room for manoeuvre in the economic, commercial and financial sectors is still very restricted in terms of its relations with the United States and the rest of the world. Zimbabwe therefore calls upon the Congress of the United States to unconditionally lift the blockade rather than modify it. The almost unanimous support for General Assembly resolution 71/5 demonstrates the universal view that the blockade is unjust and contrary to international norms for harmonious relations between States.

Holy See

[Original: English]
[22 May 2017]

The Holy See has never drawn up or applied economic, commercial or financial laws or measures against Cuba.

The Holy See has been calling and continues to call upon the world to open up to Cuba and upon Cuba to open up to the world, as His Holiness Pope Francis reaffirmed in his address to the President of Cuba upon his arrival in Cuba on 19 September 2015:

> Geographically, Cuba is an archipelago, facing all directions, with an extraordinary value as a "key" between north and south, east and west. Its natural vocation is to be a point of encounter for all peoples to join in friendship, as José Martí dreamed, "regardless of the languages of isthmuses and the barriers of oceans" […]. Such was also the desire of Saint John Paul II, with his ardent appeal: "May Cuba, with all its magnificent potential, open itself to the world, and may the world open itself to Cuba".
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> "For some months now, we have witnessed an event which fills us with hope: the process of normalizing relations between two peoples following years of estrangement. It is a process, a sign of the victory of the culture of encounter and dialogue, "the system of universal growth" over "the forever-dead system of groups and dynasties", as José Martí said. I urge political leaders to persevere on this path and to develop all its potentialities as a proof of the high

service which they are called to carry out on behalf of the peace and well-being of their peoples, of all America, and as an example of reconciliation for the entire world".

State of Palestine

[Original: English]
[3 May 2017]

The State of Palestine, which continues to suffer from the devastating humanitarian, socioeconomic, developmental, as well as political and security, impacts of a half-century of Israeli military occupation, including an inhumane blockade that has been imposed on the Gaza Strip for a decade, in grave breach of international law, reaffirms its full support for the calls by the Republic of Cuba, along with the overwhelming majority of the international community, for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba. In this regard, Palestine reaffirms its principled position in support of General Assembly resolution 71/5 of 26 October 2016 and all other relevant United Nations resolutions, as well as the positions of the Non-Aligned Movement and the Group of 77 and China, among others, calling for an end to the trade embargo that has been imposed for decades against the Republic of Cuba.

While welcoming the normalization process of bilateral relations between the Republic of Cuba and the United States of America, genuine and viable normalization requires that this long-standing and unjust economic, commercial and financial embargo be effectively ended. We thus join the international community in calling for a swift lifting of this embargo to allow for unimpeded Cuban trade and normal economic activity, which are imperative for sustainable development.

Furthermore, the State of Palestine, guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, affirms that it has never promulgated or applied laws or measures of the kind referred to in the preamble to General Assembly resolution 71/5.

The State of Palestine enjoys full diplomatic relations with the Republic of Cuba and will continue to stand in solidarity with the Cuban people and Government and to strive to strengthen political, economic and cultural relations and cooperation with the Republic of Cuba.

III. Replies received from organs and agencies of the United Nations system

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

Cuba has not signed the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty and is therefore not a member of the Preparatory Commission for the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization. In addition, Cuba does not host international monitoring system facilities under the Treaty. On 18 June 2015, Cuba was granted observer status by the Preparatory Commission, enabling it to attend meetings of the Commission and its subsidiary bodies, without the right to participate in the decision-making process. As a non-signatory State, however, Cuba is not currently a recipient of equipment and technical support related to the establishment of a national data centre that would provide it with access to the data collected by the international monitoring system, and it does not at present routinely take part in associated capacity-building or training programmes of the organization. Therefore, in the context of General Assembly resolution 71/5, the situation has not arisen whereby the existing embargo could affect the implementation of the organization's projects.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

[Original: Spanish]
[7 July 2017]

The embargo against Cuba remains in effect despite the re-establishment of diplomatic relations on 17 December 2014.

The United States embargo against Cuba is still in effect. However, since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries in December 2014 and the visit of President Barack Obama to Cuba in March 2016, there has been a gradual effort to lift some restrictions on travel and telecommunications, financial services, remittances and flights (or to ease requirements).[15]

The most significant steps towards the normalization of bilateral relations between the United States Government and the Government of Cuba include the following:

- Re-establishment of diplomatic relations, broken in January 1961, with the reopening of the United States embassy in Havana.
- Removal of the Government of Cuba from the list of State sponsors of terrorism.
- Advancement of travel, trade and promotion of microenterprises in Cuba, and the flow of information to and from the island. For example, the restrictions on travel and remittances for Cuban Americans were removed, United States telecommunications companies were authorized to operate in Cuba and channels of dialogue were opened to address issues of bilateral concern ranging from drug trafficking and migration to and from Cuba, to human rights and the need for democratic reform on the island.
- Resumption of commercial flights between Cuba and the United States. However, this resumption refers to the flights of United States airlines between the two countries; the Cubana de Aviación airline cannot make commercial flights to the United States.
- Withdrawal of certain barriers in financial services. For example, financial institutions in the United States were given permission to open correspondent accounts with Cuban financial institutions to facilitate the processing of authorized transactions.

In practice, however, it has not yet been possible to implement some of the measures announced. One example of this is the authorization for Cuba to use the dollar in transactions abroad. Although the United States Government announced in March 2016 that the dollar could be used in certain transactions, Cuba has not yet been able to make any banking transactions in dollars through banks in third countries, which continue to be cautious about the potential multimillion dollar fines for processing transactions from Cuba. Cuban banks are not allowed to establish correspondent relationships with financial institutions in the United States, either. The few existing United States investments have been authorized by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control, after a case-by-case review.

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[15] For a detailed review of the type of restrictions lifted by the United States, see the website of Engage Cuba Coalition, "U.S. Regulatory Amendments to Cuba Sanctions Since December 17, 2014", March 2016, and "A Timeline of the U.S.-Cuba Relationship Since the Thaw December 17, 2014 — Present", January 2017.

It should be noted that United States citizens are still banned from engaging in tourism to Cuba. The United States Government authorizes travel by its citizens to Cuba only for purposes corresponding to 12 categories, by general licence. These categories are: (a) family visits; (b) official business of the United States Government; (c) journalistic activity; (d) professional research and professional meetings; (e) religious activities; (f) educational activities; (g) activities related to performances; (h) athletic competitions and exhibitions; (i) support for the Cuban people; (j) humanitarian projects; (k) activities of private foundations or research or educational institutions; and (l) exportation, importation or transmission of information or information materials. In early 2016, those categories were expanded to include the organization of professional meetings or conferences in Cuba; visits to prepare for and respond to natural disasters; artistic productions in Cuba (including films, television and music); amateur or semi-professional sports competitions; and public performances, workshops and exhibitions.

With regard to trade and legal matters, 48 hours before completing its mandate, the Obama Administration signed a maritime border treaty with the Government of Cuba to delimit boundaries in the Gulf of Mexico. The treaty grants each country exclusive rights for the exploration and exploitation of oil and gas in the zones recognized as their sovereign territory. However, the Senate of the United States Congress still needs to give its consent for final approval, taking into account the arguments in its favour offered by the outgoing Government on border and maritime security and protection of the environment. Nonetheless, as an executive initiative, the new Administration can either drive these agreements forward or dismiss them with new arguments.

At the beginning of 2017, 76 companies had their registered trademark in Cuba, and another 37 were in the process of being registered, with the aim of entering the Cuban market with the legal safeguards for their operations. The Government of Cuba also succeeded in positioning its trademarks in the United States. In 2016, the United States Patent and Trademark Office legalized the brand positioning for Havana Club rum on the United States market. This was preceded by an easing of restrictions by the United States Government, allowing the brand to obtain a permit through the Office of Foreign Assets Control to protect its name in the registration process.

The Cuban authorities recognize that the flexible executive measures of the United States Government are positive steps, but they have a limited scope and effect. In particular, the Government of Cuba has indicated other measures that could be taken through executive orders from the current President of the United States (and which therefore do not require the approval of Congress):[16]

(a) Allow Cuba to open travel information offices in the United States.

(b) Authorize the export of United States products to Cuba for key branches of the Cuban economy, such as mining, tourism, biotechnology and oil production.

(c) Authorize imports of Cuban products to the United States other than those made in the non-State sector.

(d) Authorize imports to the United States of any goods made or derived from products grown, produced or manufactured in Cuba by State enterprises

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[16] With information obtained from the 20 October 2016 edition of the Cuban newspaper *Granma*.

(nickel, sugar, tobacco, rum etc.). At present, only biopharmaceutical products are permitted.

(e) Allow exports of medical supplies and equipment to Cuba which could be used to produce Cuban biotechnology products.

(f) Allow broader forms of collaboration in the development, marketing and supply of medicines and biomedical products of Cuban origin, such as direct investment from United States companies and joint ventures.

(g) Allow the sale of raw materials that Cuba needs in order to produce medicines for the Cuban population and for people in other developing countries.

(h) Authorize United States companies to market Cuban medical treatment in the United States.

(i) Authorize United States citizens to receive and pay for medical treatment in Cuba.

(j) Allow Cuban entities (banks and enterprises) to open bank accounts in the United States.

(k) Instruct United States representatives to international financial institutions not to block the granting of loans or other financing facilities to Cuba.

(l) Authorize United States citizens and companies to invest in Cuba in sectors other than telecommunications, where investments have already been approved.

(m) Authorize United States subsidiaries to do business with Cuba which does not involve the import and export of goods from and to Cuba (prohibited under the Torricelli Act), such as providing services.

(n) Authorize United States companies to carry out all transactions and exports related to the exploitation and extraction of hydrocarbon resources in Cuba's exclusive economic zone.

(o) Authorize United States companies to carry out transactions and exports in order to prevent oil spills in Cuba's exclusive economic zone or in its territorial waters.

(p) Authorize foreign companies to use deep-sea oil platforms for exploitation and extraction if they contain United States components in a proportion exceeding 25 per cent.

(q) Authorize foreign-owned platforms to take part in oil exploration in Cuba's exclusive economic zone and to use technology products from the United States.

(r) Remove the Specially Designated Nationals List, a classification which is applied to Cuban companies or foreign companies with interests in Cuba. Once added to this list, these companies are subject to all the regulations of the embargo and are unable to carry out commercial or financial transactions with the United

States or with foreign entities in third countries which have links to the United States.[17]

With regard to the new Administration of President Donald Trump and his policy towards Cuba, the Secretary of State under the new United States Administration, Rex Tillerson, announced in early 2017 that he would be proposing a "top-to-bottom" review of the current policy on Cuba.

In terms of agriculture, around a hundred agricultural organizations in the United States have sent a letter to President Trump calling for his Administration to remain committed to making progress on trade relations between the two countries. The letter was an initiative of USA Rice and Engage Cuba, a coalition which supports normalizing relations, and was signed by over 100 organizations in the United States with links to agriculture, trade and various other businesses in the agricultural sector.

On 25 January 2017, by then under the Government of President Trump, 40 tons of marabu charcoal produced in Cuba were unloaded in Port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. According to the news agency Prensa Latina, the price per ton was $420, which amounted to a total cost of $16,800. Coabana Trading, a subsidiary of Reneo Consulting, bought the charcoal from a cooperative of Cuban producers and turned it into the first product exported to the United States from Cuba in recent decades. The agreement between Coabana Trading and the Cuban State enterprise Cubaexport also includes the sale and export of honey and coffee. However, the Governor of Florida, Rick Scott, has threatened to cut funding and impose other sanctions on any of the company's ports which are receiving Cuban products. This has led to ports such as Everglades, Palm Beach and Tampa withdrawing from negotiations about receiving these products.

Sanctions against companies trading with Cuba continue: more recent examples

The United States fined the multinational company National Oilwell Varco and its subsidiaries Dreco Energy Services and National Oilwell Varco Elmar

In November 2016, the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control ordered the above United States companies to pay a fine of $5,976,028 for selling products to Cuba. The Office found that Dreco Energy Services had carried out 45 transactions between 2007 and 2009 relating to the sale of products to Cuba with a total value of $1,707,964.

As for the subsidiary National Oilwell Varco Elmar, between 2007 and 2008 it was involved in two transactions for the sale of goods and services to Havana totalling $103,119. National Oilwell Varco in fact paid $25 million as part of an agreement with the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the United States Departments of Justice and Commerce and the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement for violating sanctions imposed on Cuba since 2002.

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[17] In January 2017, the Office of Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) of the Department of the Treasury announced that 17 companies and 11 individuals were to be removed from this list. The Office decided to lift restrictions on companies and individuals from Argentina, Japan, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama and the United Kingdom. The 17 companies include Caribsugar, which has its headquarters in London; Nippon-Caribbean, Tokyo; Corporación Argentina de Ingeniería y Arquitectura, Buenos Aires; Curef Metal, Rotterdam; Exportadora del Caribe, Mexico City; and Mariscos de Farallón, Panama.

The United States fined the non-profit organization Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy Foundation

The Department of the Treasury fined the Alliance for Responsible Cuba Policy Foundation $10,000 in January 2017. According to the Office of Foreign Assets Control, the Alliance coordinated trips to Cuba between August 2010 and September 2011 for United States citizens who were not eligible to travel under one of the 12 approved categories.

The United States fined the Canadian bank Toronto Dominion

In January 2017, the United States Department of the Treasury imposed a fine of $955,750 on the Canadian bank Toronto Dominion for violating the embargo laws. According to information from the Office of Foreign Assets Control, between 2003 and 2011 the bank conducted transactions through the United States financial system for the benefit of a Canadian company which had been funding commercial operations in Cuba.

Since December 2014, when the United States and Cuban Governments announced the beginning of a process of normalizing their relations, the United States has fined seven United States entities and four foreign entities for a total of $2,843,623,359.

During the 2009-2016 [18] term of Government, 52 fines were levied for violations of the sanctions regimes against Cuba and other countries, for a total of $14,404,358,605.

Opposition by the international community

At the most recent session of the General Assembly, Member States adopted its twenty-fifth resolution calling for an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba. A total of 191 countries — an overwhelming majority — voted in favour of ending the embargo against Cuba. For the first time in the history of the vote, the United States and Israel abstained. Since 1992, the vote in the General Assembly on the resolution against United States sanctions has been held every year. That resolution has been receiving increasing support: in 2015, 191 countries voted in favour of ending the embargo and only the United States and Israel voted against it.

Total economic impact of the economic, commercial and financial embargo

According to the most recent report [19] by the Cuban Government, between April 2015 and March 2016, the direct economic damage caused by the embargo amounted to $4.68 billion at current prices. As an indication of the magnitude of these sanctions, in 2015, revenues from tourism in Cuba totalled $2.819 billion in current dollars. The damage accumulated over 55 years of embargo amounts to $753.688 billion, taking into account the depreciation in the price of gold. At current prices, the damage amounts to more than $125 billion.

The damage can be broken down as follows: (a) forgone revenue from exports; (b) losses sustained due to geographical relocation of trade; (c) impacts on local production and services; (d) monetary and financial losses; (e) impacts on the exercise of rights and on services provided to the population; (f) impacts due to the technological embargo; and (g) incitement to emigration[20] and brain drain. The health care sector has been particularly affected according to Cuban Minister Bruno Rodriguez: "The imposition of discriminatory and onerous conditions, combined with the deterrent effects of the embargo, restricts food purchases and acquisitions on the United States market of medicines, reagents, spare parts for medical equipment and instruments, and other products."[21]

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[18] The President Obama Administration ended on 20 January 2017.

[19] The full report of the Cuban Government can be consulted at: www.cubavsbloqueo.cu/sites/default/files/InformeBloqueo2016EN.pdf.

The new policy of the United States Government towards Cuba

On 16 June 2017, President Trump announced at a conference in Miami the new policy towards Cuba. On the same day, the White House published a memorandum[22] describing the policy and the timeline for when the announced new measures would be implemented. In summary, the new policy limits the economic, commercial and financial transactions of United States companies with companies linked to the Revolutionary Armed Forces (in particular the Grupo de Administración Empresarial, led by military officials and involving key sectors of the Cuban economy, such as tourism, biotechnology and transportation). It also imposes additional restrictions on United States citizens who wish to travel to Cuba under one of the 12 categories previously permitted by the President Obama Administration.

Furthermore, travel for purposes of non-academic education will be restricted and must take place in groups. Essentially, the Trump Administration has ordered the end of individual "people-to-people" travel, which allowed United States citizens to travel to Cuba without being under the auspices of an organization.

The memorandum specifies that the new policy reaffirms the United States embargo against Cuba and opposes calls emanating from the United Nations and other international forums which support Cuba and are calling for an end to the embargo. The policy also calls for regular reporting on Cuba's progress, if any, in the achievement of greater political and economic freedom.

In the same document, President Trump instructs the Department of the Treasury and the Department of Commerce to initiate a process of issuing new regulations within 30 days of the date of the memorandum. It should be noted that the policy changes will not take effect until the Departments have finalized their new regulations, a process which could take several months. The new policy replaces National Security Presidential Directive No. 52 of 28 June 2007 on United States policy toward Cuba, and Presidential Policy Directive No. 43 of 14 October 2016 on United States-Cuba normalization.

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[20] Regarding migration, on 12 January 2017, days before his term ended, President Barack Obama signed an executive order terminating the policy established by his democratic predecessor in the White House, President Bill Clinton, known as the "wet foot/dry foot policy". The policy allowed Cuban migrants who reached United States soil to obtain a permit giving them legal residency, security and a work permit, as well as the possibility to apply for permanent residency one year and one day after their arrival (and thus benefit from the Cuban Adjustment Act). The new executive order partly responds to the calls of the Cuban Government, which has repeatedly denounced such incentives for illegal migration as inhumane, given the number of victims illegal migration has claimed, and as an attempt to politically and socially destabilize Cuba. The Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program was also terminated. Under that programme, thousands of professionals from Cuba on "internationalist missions" had sought asylum in the United States.

[21] Remarks by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Bruno Rodríguez, during the presentation of the draft resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", before the General Assembly of the United Nations, New York, on 26 October 2016.

[22] National Security Presidential Memorandum on Strengthening the Policy of the United States Toward Cuba. The full document can be consulted at: www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/2017/06/16/national-security-presidential-memorandum-strengthening-policy-united.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

[Original: English]
[19 May 2017]

Overall situation: effects of the embargo on the sectors of food security, agriculture, fisheries and the food industry

The main changes since the previous reporting period can be summarized as follows:

(a) The cereal production of Cuba in 2016 is estimated at 690,000 tons (rice in milled equivalent), approximately 7 per cent above 2015, but still below the country's five-year average as a result of severe drought during the first half of the year, caused by the El Niño phenomenon and the impact of Hurricane Matthew in early October 2016.

(b) Limited water availability for irrigation is estimated to have kept 2016 paddy production in Cuba below 2013 indicators, at 465,000 tons (310,000 tons, milled equivalent). Early prospects for the 2017 season point to rice production remaining on its path to recovery, although persistent water supply restrictions may cap area expansions for the fourth consecutive season. The production of maize in 2016 is estimated at 380,000 tons, 5 per cent above the drought-reduced 2015 output. The increase in maize production was lower than originally anticipated, reflecting lower yields and crop losses as a result of Hurricane Matthew. Nonetheless, imported volumes of cereals have remained steady in recent years, around 2 million tons, and in 2016/17 they are expected to cover about two thirds of the country's domestic consumption.

The main effects of the embargo on agriculture, fisheries, livestock and the food industry should continue to be viewed from two different perspectives:

(a) The impossibility of taking full advantage of the export potential (i.e., coffee, honey, tobacco, live lobsters and aquaculture products) to the nearest market (the United States of America) has implied major losses, since it has been necessary to sell to markets located farther away, with the resultant higher marketing and distribution costs, which negatively affects the country's foreign exchange earnings and its capacity to purchase basic products, especially food;

(b) The high costs for inputs needed for agricultural, fisheries and livestock production (fuel, spare parts for agricultural machinery, animal feeds, phyto- and zoo-sanitary products and fertilizers, and modern technological products such as herbicides, low toxicity insecticides and other highly effective pesticides or veterinary pharmaceuticals, disease diagnostic kits which in many cases are only produced by United States firms) decreases profitability and lowers the country's ability to satisfy local food demand. Following certain amendments to the Cuban Assets Control Regulations and Export Administration Regulations, in force since January 2016, United States exports of herbicides, pesticides and insecticides to Cuba should now be easier.

Overall, the embargo has very negative implications for Cuba's balance of trade and foreign exchange earnings, as well as for the country's supply of food and agriculture products. One of the bottlenecks that the Government of Cuba is facing in its ongoing economic update process is its acute shortage of foreign currency. The main source of foreign currency expenditure is the purchase of agricultural products amounting to around $800 million per year.

The embargo affects the import of food products for human consumption, particularly those destined for social programmes, as the embargo restricts their quantity and quality, thus having a direct effect on the food security of the vulnerable segments of the population. The overall economic damage in the agricultural sector between June 2015 and May 2016 is estimated to be $183,517,429.

An additional problem resulting from the embargo relates to the difficulty for Cuba to access external multilateral financing for development programmes in agriculture and rural development in general and the related unavailability of resources for rehabilitating and modernizing agricultural equipment and infrastructure.

It is to be noted that, although the direct impact on the Cuban economy is difficult to measure, in 2016, Cuba and the United States signed a memorandum of understanding on agriculture and related fields. The memorandum is expected to enhance cooperation on issues like sanitary and phytosanitary measures, plant and animal sanitation, standards and forest conservation. In 2017, a memorandum of understanding on animal and plant health was also signed, which aims to improve cooperation in the fields of animal and plant health, protection and quarantine.

Even the operations of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) are directly affected, although it is officially exempted from the embargo. Delays in or blocking of payments to FAO staff (even if made in euros) and to providers for project procurement reduces the willingness of suppliers to sell to FAO-Cuba and increases the cost of procurement from the few remaining suppliers.

Effects of the embargo on selected agricultural commodities

Cereals

The economic damage to cereal production as a result of the embargo is estimated at $2,447,830. Of this, $571,830 results from price differentials between procurement of inputs from the United States and from more distant and expensive markets. Of particular impact is the difficulty in obtaining quality seeds, exacerbated by the fact that the international seed market is dominated by a few multinational companies. The economic damage owing to this factor is estimated at $1,057,125.

Preliminary forecasts for cereal (milled rice equivalent) production in Cuba in 2017 point to an output level of 760,000 tons, approximately 10 per cent more than in 2016. Planting for the 2017 dry-season paddy crops finished in April, while the challenge caused by constrained water supply remained. Weather forecasts, however, indicate that precipitation levels between May and July will remain within normal levels across the island, likely benefiting main-season crops, which are sown by May. State-led investments in irrigation and drainage infrastructure also continue, having contributed to steady yield improvements in recent years. Together, these factors are anticipated to lift paddy production in Cuba to 520,000 tons in 2017 (347,000 tons, milled equivalent), which is 12 per cent more than the 2016 level.

Despite ongoing Government efforts to liberalize and promote domestic production, Cuba remains highly dependent on rice imports to meet its consumption needs. Given the production constraints posed by an insufficient water supply, rice imports are expected to remain at above-average levels of close to 520,000 tons in calendar year 2017. Payment and financial restrictions imposed by the embargo have had a considerable impact on rice deliveries from the United States to Cuba. Virtually no rice has been shipped from the United States to the island since 2008. Instead, Cuba relies on Viet Nam to provide the bulk of its rice needs through a government-to-government arrangement that allows Cuba to defer payments of purchases. The balance is supplied by South American exporters, namely Brazil, Argentina and, more recently, Uruguay. Amendments to the embargo effective since 2015, in particular the reinterpretation of the "cash in advance" requirement to mean "cash before transfer of title and control", have not translated into a revival of United States rice shipments to Cuba, given continued restrictions on financing options and the more advantageous terms provided by alternate rice suppliers. Still, the United States industry maintains that it could provide up to 30 per cent of Cuba's rice import requirements within two years of the lifting of the embargo, owing to the commercial advantage provided by the countries' geographical proximity. In the case of coarse grains, imports are projected to be on the order of 800,000 tons in 2016/17 (July/June); while wheat imports are expected to reach about 760,000 tons. Overall, cereal imports account for about two thirds of the domestic consumption.

Oilseeds

Oilseed production in Cuba is not significant and, as a result, the country depends almost entirely on imports to meet its vegetable oil and meal needs. Commodities dominating imports are soybeans, soybean oil and soybean meal. When the United States embargo came into effect, Brazil and Argentina became the main suppliers of soybeans and derived products. Both Mexico and Canada have occasionally shipped small volumes to Cuba. Cuba has imported non-soybean oilseed products from Argentina, Canada, China, Mexico and the European Union, among others. Imports of soybeans and derived products from the United States resumed in 2002. In that year, following the implementation of the United States Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act, and owing to geographic proximity, the United States became Cuba's principal supplier of soybeans, soybean oil and soymeal — largely replacing deliveries from other regions. In the case of soymeal, the United States has retained that position until today, however, its sales of soybeans and soybean oil have been progressively replaced by more competitive offers from Argentina and Brazil. With the normalization of relations between the United States and Cuba now under way, potential reforms could raise the competitiveness of United States soybean and soybean oil exports, which would widen Cuba's import options.

Raw sugar

According to the latest estimates of FAO, sugar production in Cuba increased by 200,000 tons during the crop year 2016/17, reaching 2 million tons, 11 per cent higher than the previous season, making it the fastest growing segment of the economy. Better sugar recovery rates coupled with larger harvested areas account for the increase, added to recent investments in mechanization of the sector. While consumption has remained substantially unchanged at 600,000 tons, the growth of sugar exports is estimated at 16 per cent, with the main destinations being China and the Russian Federation. Early estimates for 2017/18 indicate production is on the rise, as the weather conditions were favourable at the beginning of the crop season, and as a result of recent investments in the sector. Over the years, the embargo has resulted in reduced availability of spare parts and agricultural inputs. The embargo, through the raw sugar tariff-rate quota, also prevents Cuba's access to the United States market and to the Coffee, Sugar and Cocoa Exchange in New York.

Meat

National meat production has been growing slowly and stood at 326,000 tons in 2016. Pork is the most important category, followed by beef and then poultry.

Cuba imported 288,000 tons of meat in 2016. The main type of imported meat is poultry, followed by beef and pork. In 2016, 242,000 tons of poultry were imported, of which 67 per cent originated in the United States, while a further 27 per cent was supplied by Brazil. Brazil, Canada and the European Union are the main sources of imports of beef and pork. The damage to the economy arising from the slow growth in the meat industry is significant, especially as a result of to the high import cost for animal feed; the price differential for importing animal feed from more distant markets; and difficulties in accessing modern production technologies, manufacturing and distribution systems, veterinary pharmaceuticals and other inputs. Despite the recent changes in government policy in favour of the development of national agriculture, productivity increases are hampered by restricted access to financial resources and technologies and limited infrastructure. Restrictions on the import of technology and genetics mean that the least expensive or most convenient sources of supplies cannot necessarily be accessed.

Dairy products

The national dairy sector is one of the priority areas of the food policy of the Government of Cuba, which aims to become less dependent on imported food. Constraints on the sector's growth are the high cost of imported feed and limited availability of fuel for transport and distribution.

Milk production in Cuba has not increased significantly since 2013 and is estimated at 603,000 tons for 2016. Imports account for approximately 80 per cent of domestic use. Milk powder is the principal item imported, with supplies coming mainly from Europe, Latin America and Oceania (New Zealand). Milk powder alone accounts for $400 million, which is equivalent to 20 per cent of total foreign currency expenditures. Thus, a major aim of the current agricultural policy is to substitute milk powder imports with domestic supply. To address this challenge in 2017, the Government received a loan for $30 million from the international cooperation community. The country is expected to repay this loan with the income derived from increasing production and the related effect on the economic savings derived from milk powder import substitution. Achieving this goal will require not only producing more, but most importantly producing more per unit of input, at equal and lower global prices. This means increasing the level of productivity of the dairy sector in a sustainable manner.

Fish products

Fish products are important for food security in Cuba as a source of nutrition and earnings from exports. Almost all of Cuba's fish exports consist of high-value products, notably frozen lobster and shrimp, which are in high demand on the international market. However, the embargo prevents access to the United States market, which is one of the most important markets and the leading world importer of fish and fish products. As a result, Cuba exports to more distant destinations, facing higher marketing and distribution costs. In addition, the economic crisis in some of its markets had a negative impact on demand from 2012 to 2014, resulting in a decline in exports. In 2015, as a result of improved demand, exports reached an estimated $53 million, representing an increase of 26 per cent compared with 2014, but a decline of 19 per cent compared with 2011 and of 30 per cent compared with 2005. Fish imports, consisting mainly of low-value fish products, increased in 2015, compared with 2014, reaching an estimated $41 million.

Tobacco

The economic impact of the embargo on the tobacco sector is estimated at $117,500,000 owing to the lack of income from potential sales to the United States market. The increase of prices of raw material, spare parts, tobacco and equipment that cannot be purchased in the United States market is estimated to have an economic impact of $1,020,800.

Fruit

The economic impact of the embargo on the fruit sector is estimated at more than $1,500,270 owing to the difference in prices as a result of the shift in the import markets.

Honey

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at $81,940 as a result of lost income from potential sales to the United States market.

Citrus

The economic impact of the embargo on the citrus sector is estimated at $615,558.96 as a result of lost income from potential sales to the United States market.

Seeds

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at $21,786.31 for amounts paid to third countries.

Vegetable oil production

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at $560,000 as a result of lost income from potential sales to the United States market.

Forestry

The economic impact of the embargo is estimated at $24,336,000 as a result of the lack of access to better equipment and technology. The low levels of domestic production are remedied by importing wood from third countries.

Technical assistance to Cuba by the Food and Agriculture Organization

The Food and Agriculture Organization continues to provide support to Cuba, notably in promoting rural development and fisheries with emphasis on food security. In addition, FAO has assisted Cuban institutions in organizing several international congresses and events in the areas of sustainable agriculture, organic agriculture, animal production and animal health surveillance; cooperatives and family farming; fisheries and related policies; forestry and biodiversity; environment and climate change. In addition, FAO assists Cuban experts in providing help for South-South cooperation and in attending meetings on international conventions and agreements; travel logistics and flight bookings are also affected by the embargo.

In the context of South-South cooperation, FAO is supporting the Cuban participation in a joint activity with the International Regional Organization for Plant and Animal Health for the eradication of the classic swine pest in the Dominican Republic, Haiti and Cuba.

Technical support for the life-cycle management of pesticides continues to be provided to Cuba as part of the regional initiatives under the project funded by the European Commission to support capacity-building related to multilateral environmental agreements in African, Caribbean and Pacific countries, for the clean-up of obsolete pesticides, pesticide management and sustainable pest management. The project has supported the inventory of obsolete pesticides, strengthening pesticide registration and raising awareness of pesticide issues. Cuba participates in workshops in the framework of the project.

Policy and technical support has been provided to update the national agricultural policy, with particular emphasis on the dairy sector, as this constitutes one of the most important components of the food basket, as well as being a major economic engine for the generation of employment and income in rural areas. Technical assistance has focused on assessing the productivity level of different forms of industrial organizations and assisting the Government in identifying policy recommendations to strengthen the industrial set-up of the national dairy sector.

The Food and Agriculture Organization provided technical support and assistance to develop tools for Cuba to establish its national information system mechanism for applying the new monitoring approach for the Global Plan of Action for the Conservation and Sustainable Utilization of Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture. The Cuban delegation participates routinely, through the FAO Commission and its intergovernmental working group, on plant genetic resources for food and agriculture, in the development of the policy framework of the Second Global Plan of Action on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture, indicators and targets for plant genetic resources and preparation of gene bank standards for plant genetic resources.

Policy advice is provided for agricultural sector policies, agro environmental policies, rural youth employment and the development of sustainable intensification programmes based on FAO pilot projects in the grain, milk and beef value chains. In addition, FAO is assisting Cuba in projects focusing on rehabilitation and conservation of the environment, particularly in managed landscapes and in resilience to resist the risks associated with climate change.

Effects of the embargo on projects implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization in Cuba

Given the situation of the embargo to which Cuba is subjected, projects implemented by FAO in the country are affected in regard to the procurement of equipment and supplies that complement the activities of technical assistance provided by FAO because the resources that could be imported from the United States have to be imported from more distant markets, at much higher prices and higher freight costs. If acquisitions could be made in the United States, it would be much cheaper and more activities would be supported by the available budget.

Under the remaining embargo conditions, the processes of payments and banking transactions to and from suppliers who provide services to cooperation projects and to the FAO country office are still hindered. This is demonstrated by banks rejecting transfers from FAO for sales to Cuba; the impossibility for suppliers of offering products to Cuba obtained from other United States companies; the inability of suppliers to transfer funds to Cuba for the payment of services contracted in the country. Conditions affecting banking processes for FAO staff arising from expensive and drawn-out formalities also remain.

A summary of damages caused by the embargo in some of the sectors in which FAO is providing technical assistance and other sectors included within its country programme framework is presented below.

The impact originated essentially in:

(a) Price difference owing to the relocation of the import market;

(b) Additional charges on freight insurance;

(c) Additional costs due to the a freeze on assets;

(d) Monetary damages;

(e) Financial losses due to lack of access to technology from the United States;

(f) Relocation of exports.

International Atomic Energy Agency

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The assistance activities of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) to all of its member States, including Cuba, are governed by article III/C of its statute, which reads as follows: "in carrying out its functions, the Agency shall not make assistance to members subject to any political, economic, military, or other conditions incompatible with the provisions of this Statute".

However, the existing embargo poses certain difficulties for the implementation of the Technical Cooperation Programme of the IAEA in Cuba. The procurement of essential equipment and material (such as radiopharmaceuticals) is quite often subject to cost increases and time delays as the vendors willing and able to procure for and/or ship to Cuba is very limited.

Moreover, restrictions apply to the participation of Cuban nationals in training activities, fellowships and meetings organized by IAEA in the United States and vice versa. In accordance with the above-mentioned article of its statute, the Agency tries to overcome such difficulties, to the extent possible by, for example, sending Cuban nationals to other countries for training, in order to meet the Programme requirements.

International Civil Aviation Organization

[Original: English]
[16 June 2017]

During the thirty-ninth session of the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO) Assembly, held from 27 September to 7 October 2016 in Montreal, Canada, the Economic Commission considered a working paper presented by Cuba that provided information concerning the adverse effects of the continued economic, commercial and financial embargo, imposed by the United States, on the development of air transport in Cuba. While noting some progress had been made in certain areas relating to civil aviation since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the two Governments, Cuba pointed out that the continued embargo has negative repercussions for Cuban civil aviation. Cuba proposed that ICAO recognize that unilateral measures and their extraterritorial application adversely affect the sustainable development of civil aviation. The Commission took note of the information contained in the working paper and of the views expressed during the discussion. In the updated Assembly resolution on continuing ICAO policies in the field of air transport (A39-15), the Assembly urged States members of ICAO to avoid adopting unilateral and extraterritorial measures that may affect the orderly, sustainable and harmonious development of international air transport and to ensure that domestic policies and legislation are not applied to international air transport without taking due account of its special characteristics. ICAO continues to monitor developments and, where possible and appropriate, work with the two countries to improve their civil aviation relations.

In the context of the thirty-ninth session of the ICAO Assembly, on 4 October 2016, ICAO signed a management service agreement with the Ministry of Transportation of Cuba.

In November 2016, a mission of ICAO met with the Institute of Civil Aeronautics of Cuba and the Cuban Aviation Corporation. The objective of the mission was to discuss Cuba's requirements for support in the development of its airport infrastructure. At the end of 2016, and as a result of the mission, ICAO sent Cuba project proposals related to:

- Assessment of infrastructure investment needs to fully equip and modernize six airports in Cuba
- Review of the civil aviation legal framework regarding airport concessions
- Development of a civil aviation master plan
- Assistance with airport concessions
- Purchase of Automatic Dependent Surveillance Broadcast (ADS-B) transponders for the existing commercial fleet

Currently, ICAO maintains conversations with representatives of Cuba with regard to those projects.

Cuba has been active as a member of several regional projects implemented through the ICAO Technical Cooperation Bureau. The objective of the first project is to provide administrative assistance in the management and administration of the Latin American Civil Aviation Commission secretariat. The second relates to fostering the implementation of performance-based air navigation systems in the Caribbean region, leading to a seamless global air traffic management system. The third concerns the regional safety oversight system, which encompasses the requisite technical, logistical and administrative support in accordance with the provision of the Convention on International Civil Aviation and its annexes.

International Civil Defence Organization

[Original: English]
[24 April 2017]

The International Civil Defence Organization (ICDO) reaffirms its view that the United Nations is an appropriate forum in which to address questions related to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. It therefore welcomes the positive consideration of resolution 71/5, adopted by the General Assembly on 26 October 2016, on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba.

Cuba became a full member of the International Civil Defence Organization on 18 December 2014. Its needs are great in the four steps related to disaster management: prevention, preparedness, response and recovery. Thus, and to fulfil its obligations towards its member States, ICDO is in the process of providing technical assistance in different areas of civil defence in Cuba, through the transfer of equipment and technology and supporting training courses in civil defence.

International Fund for Agricultural Development

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) notes that like other small island developing States in the Caribbean, Cuba has a relatively small economy, which is characterized by difficult access to international markets, high dependency on imports and tourism and high vulnerability to external economic and environmental shocks.

The challenges faced by Cuba as a small island developing State appear to be exacerbated by the existing trading and financial restrictions. In particular in the agricultural and rural sector, where limitations contribute to low productivity levels, limits in the quantity, quality and competitiveness of domestic food production and make high levels of food imports necessary to cover the needs of the population. The limitations include:

- Obsolete agricultural equipment (e.g. tractors, irrigation systems, water pumps) and a lack of spare parts;
- High cost and lack of inputs required for agricultural and livestock production, processing and distribution (e.g. fuel, animal feed, fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, veterinary pharmaceuticals);
- Lengthy import procedures and high costs of imports (due to limited international competition);
- Insufficient access to hard currency financing for the import of equipment and inputs;
- Limited access to providers of new agricultural technologies;
- Limited export opportunities for some agricultural products.

IFAD maintains an open dialogue with the Government of Cuba, through its representatives in Italy, as well as with in-country counterparts, on all matters pertaining to rural development, agricultural production and food security in the country. Cuba also participates in the Governing Council of IFAD as a member State and the country has been reintegrated into the regular lending and programme of work since September 2012. In addition, IFAD keeps an ongoing dialogue and cooperates with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations and other United Nations entities present in the country.

In September 2013, IFAD approved a project for Cuba on cooperative rural development in the eastern region with IFAD financing of $10.7 million and which is expected to benefit some 13,000 rural households living in 157 private cooperatives in the provinces of Las Tunas, Holguín, Granma and Santiago de Cuba. The project was signed in November 2013, started in July 2014 and is currently in its third year of implementation.

In December 2016, IFAD approved a second project on cooperative cattle development in the central and eastern regions, with IFAD financing $11.9 million, which focuses on milk and meat production in 105 cooperatives in the province of Camagüey and is expected to benefit some 11,500 rural households. The project was signed in January 2017 and is expected to be implemented in the second semester of 2017.

International Labour Organization

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The International Labour Organization (ILO) recognizes progress made over recent years in the relationship between the United States of America and Cuba, including calls upon the Congress of the United States to lift the blockade. ILO also notes with satisfaction that some progress has been made towards cooperation between Cuba and the United States in energy and health and in safety and health in agriculture, and that some specific regulations have been reviewed in order to be lifted, aspects ILO deems important for contributing to decent work.

Nevertheless, ILO observes with concern that, for the most part, the blockade still remains in place and has a dissuasive effect on potential investors, affecting indirectly, and even directly, economic development perspectives and therefore job creation and decent work, among the elements of the blockade still in place are:

- Unnecessary restrictions on the transfer of remittances still imply a high indirect tax burden on salaries legitimately earned abroad and sent for household spending on basic human needs such as food, clothing, education, housing, water and sanitation;
- Limitations of other financial transactions, for example, for Cuban banks opening accounts in the United States or access to credit for trade operations, still represent a serious bottleneck and additional cost burden for business development and job creation, as decent work largely depends on productive investment and access to financing;
- Currency restrictions and company sanctions limit investment and trade opportunities;
- Limited access to technology transfer implies further difficulties for enterprise, social and economic development.

The direct and indirect effects of the blockade on the Cuban economy and its people not only affect enterprises, but even more their workers and the population in general. ILO is particularly concerned about the impact on children, workers and the elderly. Ending the blockade would turn the overall loss of at least $1 billion into an opportunity for productive investment, employment generation and new job opportunities.

The International Labour Organization currently provides technical assistance to the Labour Ministry, the Cuban Confederation of Workers, the National Employer's Organization and Azcuba, on the following thematic areas (and others that might be agreed upon in the future):

- Rural employment/productivity improvements in the sugar industry
- Safety and health at work — prevention strategies
- Labour inspection
- Social security forecasting models
- International labour standards
- Wage policies

Cuba is a deputy member of the ILO Governing Body and will actively participate in the 106th International Labour Conference (5 to 16 June 2017) and other committees of the organization. ILO considers that the General Assembly is the appropriate forum for addressing questions related to ending the economic, commercial and financial blockade against Cuba.

International Maritime Organization

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

As a State member of the International Maritime Organization (IMO), Cuba participates in the meetings of IMO bodies and is a recipient of the available technical cooperation programmes (IMO regional programmes on support to maritime development in Latin America, support to maritime development, in the Caribbean and global programmes, as applicable).

The International Maritime Organization maintains collaborative relations with all Latin American States members, including Cuba. Since the early 1980s, IMO has collaborated closely with the Operative Network for Regional Cooperation among Maritime Authorities of the Americas, a Latin American maritime network which includes South America, Cuba, Mexico and Panama.

The assistance of IMO to Latin America is guided by the maritime strategies of the region which are revised every five years and the organization will continue to focus on supporting their implementation. Countries in the Operative Network have addressed issues such as safety standards and training aspects and also marine environment protection through regional strategies, with numerous training activities organized in cooperation with IMO. In this context, and in accordance with the decentralization policies adopted by IMO, most IMO support is channelled through the Operative Network by virtue of a memorandum of understanding signed with the secretariat of the Operative Network. Through this instrument, the Operative Network is assigned responsibility for the management and execution of regional technical cooperation activities identified by the respective countries, including Cuba, as priorities in building capacities for the effective implementation and enforcement of IMO global maritime standards.

Cuba also receives technical assistance from the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency, Information and Training Centre for the wider Caribbean, a regional activity centre based in Curaçāo, which aims to assist countries in the wider Caribbean region in the prevention and response to major pollution incidents in the marine environment.

Unfortunately, in one instance only, the embargo by the United States of America against Cuba affected not only the country's participation but also the delivery of a regional activity. This was the regional training course for instructors of maritime English organized by the Operative Network and was to be held in Colombia from 3 to 7 October 2016. The secretariat of the Operative Network (Brazil) indicated that the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Department of the Treasury had blocked the current account of the secretariat in New York. This action prevented the payment to the travel agents for issued air tickets, as well as the daily subsistence allowance to the other foreign participants to the regional course. The account was blocked because a national from Cuba was participating in the regional training course funded by IMO; this was contrary to the United States economic sanctions against the country. The regional training course had to be postponed until November 2016, which meant changes in all logistical and financial arrangements.

International Telecommunication Union

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

Since May 2013, Cuba has not submitted to the Radiocommunication Bureau of the International Telecommunication Union any report of harmful interference in their broadcasting services.

Inter-Parliamentary Union

[Original: English]
[30 June 2017]

The Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU) has for many years held the view that "economic sanctions should be avoided as far as possible [...] to ensure international peace and security". IPU recently adopted a resolution, by consensus, on the role of parliament in respecting the principle of non-intervention in the internal affairs of States, at its 136th Assembly, held in Dhaka, in April 2017. The resolution underscores that "the people of each country have the inalienable right to determine their own political future, and freely pursue their economic, social and cultural development, in accordance with international law".

The Inter-Parliamentary Union welcomes the ongoing efforts by the United States of America and Cuba to improve relations. IPU was delighted to learn that, in February 2017, a bipartisan Congressional delegation from the United States visited Cuba to discuss greater cooperation between the two countries and to find ways to work together on issues of mutual concern. IPU is convinced that it is only through political dialogue that countries can overcome their differences and lay the groundwork for lasting peace and sustainable development. IPU would like to reiterate its firm support for the lifting of the economic blockade against Cuba and express its solidarity with the Cuban people who continue to suffer from its consequences.

Office for Outer Space Affairs

[Original: English]
[2 June 2017]

Cuba has been a State member of the Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space since 2001. Between 1994 and 2001, Cuba participated in the work of the Committee and its subcommittees, following the Committee's practice of sharing seats on a rotating basis. Since the early 1980s, Cuba has regularly attended the sessions of the Committee and its subcommittees as an observer.

In 1990, Cuba organized, jointly with the Office for Outer Space Affairs, a workshop on the theme "Space communications for development", held in Havana, from 26 to 30 March 1990. In 2012, Cuban experts benefited from participating in a workshop on space law on the theme "Contribution of space law to economic and social development", held in Buenos Aires, from 5 to 8 November 2012 (see A/AC.105/1037).

The potential for disasters as a result of natural hazards, such as hurricanes, tsunamis, volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, landslides, droughts, floods and heat waves, is high in the Caribbean. In the course of multiple crises over the years, the Government of Cuba has put in place an efficient and unique alert system reaching all corners of the country. However, the use of satellite-based data, as well as of precise positioning and navigation systems or of modern satellite telecommunication, by its civil protection agency could improve the precision of the alert system and increase the time available for notifying the population, while providing for improved planning and preparedness. The integration of these tools in the existing systems in Cuba would be greatly facilitated by well-structured participation of all stakeholders at the various levels of administration in Cuba.

The United Nations Platform for Space-based Information for Disaster Management and Emergency Response (UN-SPIDER) celebrated its tenth anniversary in 2016, when its community looked to further put the Platform's mission into action: "Ensure that all countries and international and regional organizations have access to and develop the capacity to use all types of space-based information to support the full disaster management cycle". The Platform, a programme implemented by the Office for Outer Space Affairs, is achieving its mission by focusing on being a gateway to space information for disaster management support, by serving as a bridge to connect the disaster management, risk management and space communities and by being a facilitator of capacity-building and institutional strengthening, in particular for developing countries. Besides Vienna, the programme has offices in Bonn, Germany, and in Beijing, and is currently supported by 21 regional support offices (including 5 in Latin America), all of which are crucial to fulfilling the mission of the platform, as they serve as an important connector to a number of stakeholders at the regional and national levels and integrate space-related expertise.

Since 2009, the Platform has provided detailed advisory services to six countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean region: the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras and Jamaica. That support has allowed Governments to set priorities to strengthen their capabilities in discovering, accessing and using space-based data, information, products and services, helping to reduce the vulnerability of their population and infrastructure in the face of natural hazards. The actions of UN-SPIDER have also provided support at the regional level, including in developing a regional network in Central America and the Dominican Republic to work towards drought monitoring and early warning systems. In addition to proposing step-by-step procedures to take advantage of satellite imagery, the regional approach facilitates the exchange of trans-boundary information and expertise on long-term problems, which are otherwise much harder to tackle at the national level.

Finally, in support of the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030, the Office for Outer Space Affairs has set up a global partnership using space-based technology applications for disaster risk reduction and is a key member of the International Network on Multi-Hazard Early Warning Systems. Those mechanisms put space technology and applications forward as a critical set of tools to plan, prepare, measure and monitor the efforts of nations in reducing risks associated to natural hazards.

A technical advisory mission of the Platform, through a Spanish-speaking international expert team that could consult key entities in Cuba with responsibilities or potential roles in disaster risk reduction and emergency response, would allow the assessment not only of the current capabilities but also of the priorities for action. Such a mission could be planned and executed in 2018, funds permitting, delivering clear recommendations for the consideration of the Government of Cuba. The mission would integrate practices and issues considered by the above-mentioned mechanisms, among others.

Office of the Resident Coordinator of the United Nations system for operational activities for development, Cuba

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

Cuba is a country with a high human development index. National authorities have expressed their commitment to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The Government of Cuba is implementing a transformation process to update its economic model, focusing on national priorities, such as economic efficiency and productivity, the national food security strategy and import substitution policies. National authorities have stated their strong commitment to maintaining social development standards. Economic and social policy guidelines address the fundamental principles of such process. One of the guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration, with particular reference to the entities of the United Nations system. In addition, the draft conceptualization of the Cuban economic and social model and the 2030 national plan for economic and social development have been submitted to a wide consultation process across Cuban society. Those two strategic documents are expected to be approved in 2017. In this context, the United Nations system supports the efforts of national authorities to address emerging issues and development challenges.

The current United Nations Development Assistance Framework (2014-2018) supports sustainable development priorities, focusing on four strategic cooperation areas: population dynamics and social and/or cultural services; sustainable economic development, which includes value chains, local development and sustainable energy development; food security; and environmental sustainability and disaster risk management.

Hurricane Matthew was the strongest hurricane to hit Guantánamo province since records began. It ravaged the eastern provinces on 4 and 5 October 2016. Despite national and local authorities' preparedness measures, thousands of homes were totally or partially destroyed. Agriculture and food facilities, communications, electrical and road infrastructures and social institutions, among others, were severely damaged. The United Nations system in Cuba launched a plan of action to support the country in its immediate response and early recovery efforts for the affected population.

The United Nations system in Cuba welcomes the restoration of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States of America, the steps taken towards normalizing relations and the measures introduced by the United States of America in 2015 and 2016. Although a number of sanctions were lifted over the past year, many restrictions are still in place and new regulations will take some time to be implemented. The embargo continues to affect economic, social and environmental development of the Cuban people, in particular the quality of life of the most vulnerable socioeconomic groups.

Cuba and the United States, have both expressed interest in cooperating in such areas as health, environmental issues and climate change, information and communication technologies and response to disasters.

The United Nations country team in Cuba comprises the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the United Nations Population Fund, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Food Programme and the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization. In addition, non-resident entities, including the Economic Commission for Latin

America and the Caribbean, the International Fund for Agricultural Development, the International Atomic Energy Agency, the International Labour Organization, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs, the Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Human Settlements Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women and the United Nations Volunteers programme have ongoing activities and initiatives in Cuba.

Each United Nations agency, fund and programme has provided individual inputs to the present report of the Secretary-General. The submission by the United Nations country team in Cuba summarizes the most significant cross-cutting issues that are having a negative impact on the humanitarian and development cooperation of the United Nations system in Cuba.

Purchase of inputs at non-competitive prices and limitations on the import of goods, services and technologies patented in the United States

Cuban national companies and foreign companies established in Cuba cannot purchase products, components or technologies from the United States even though the United States represents the closest, most competitive and most diversified market. Alternative markets that are adequate are more distant, resulting in higher import costs and delays in delivery time.

Goods, services or technologies produced by the United States, covered by United States patents or containing any component produced and/or patented by the United States, are not available to Cuba. In addition, the embargo places restrictions on shipping line companies whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This situation significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading and delivery of goods.

This situation causes critical difficulties for the implementation of United Nations programmes and projects, in particular in the acquisition and purchasing of development and humanitarian products, such as medicines, medical equipment, fertilizers, food supplements, laboratory equipment, agricultural implements, educational tools, computers, information and communications software, construction materials and bibliographic resources, even if they are purchased through multilateral cooperation.

The offices of the United Nations system in the country rarely benefit from global United Nations corporate contracts with United States companies for the purchase of equipment and services, such as computers, software licences and Internet services. This affects the day-to-day work of United Nations offices in Cuba, placing them at a disadvantage compared with other country offices. In particular, access to Internet services is limited because of the embargo, thus restraining the effective use of corporate platforms and increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities. Moreover, voice and data communications have to bypass United States telecommunications infrastructure and providers must therefore be exclusively identified for the United Nations offices in Cuba, entailing higher prices and administrative costs.

Financial resources that could be used to more effectively achieve the expected development results are used to cover additional costs incurred owing to the conditions caused by the embargo.

Development credits granted by international financial institutions and financial services from United States banks

The embargo limits the access by Cuba to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, which, in turn, has narrowed the possibility of obtaining financial resources to support national and/or local development plans in Cuba.

United Nations offices in Cuba cannot make use of corporate accounts with United States banks or use the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The offices therefore have to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations, resulting in higher costs, the use of third-country banks and a heavier administrative burden. The related additional costs have been covered by the United Nations and project funds from other donor countries. The ability of the offices to honour payments to suppliers within the agreed timeframe has been affected.

The embargo has also affected the financial transactions and banking and insurance services for international and national United Nations staff.

Exchange of expertise

Cuban experts invited to events in the United States have experienced difficulties in obtaining visas in a timely manner. The planning of trips involving Cuban nationals requires additional time because of the visa process. This situation affects professional exchanges and partnership-building in key areas of development.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

[Original: English]
[10 July 2017]

The administration of President Donald Trump has heavily criticized the previous administration for "softening" the position of the United States of America towards Cuba and, on 16 June 2017, announced it would reverse many measures. Some of the new measures will restrict travel by individuals to Cuba and restrict the flow of payments to the many Cuban companies owned by the Government's security forces on the grounds that, according to the administration of President Trump, there was a worsening human rights situation on the island. Diplomatic relations will remain in place. Commercial air and sea links will be exempt from the new restrictions for organized groups only. As described below by the Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, these measures will negatively affect the basic human rights of people in Cuba, but will not achieve the goals for which they were designed.

Work of the Human Rights Council's Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights

In his reports to the seventy-second session of the General Assembly and the thirty-sixth session of the Human Rights Council, Special Rapporteur on the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights, Idriss Jazairy, focuses on the negative human rights impact of extraterritorial sanctions under international law and questions their legality. He points to the United States in particular for sanctioning foreign financial institutions for having engaged in financial transactions initiated outside the United States, that do not comply with United States sanctions regimes and has purported to regulate foreign exchange transactions. According to the Special Rapporteur, the extraterritorial sanctions of the United States against Cuba have had a negative impact on the country's ability to trade with the outside world and access foreign currency and international markets, including its ability to purchase food, medicines and technology at competitive prices. They have also anchored the existing two-currency system (Cuban peso and the convertible peso), with the consequence of deepening the discrimination between those Cuban citizens able to travel abroad or with access to the convertible currency and those who do not have such access.

The Special Rapporteur calls upon States to comply with the basic principles of international law that point to the elimination of unilateral coercive measures as well as to ensure that coercive measures comply with human rights obligations, by assessing their potential impact on human rights, monitoring their implementation and ensuring effective human rights and humanitarian exemptions.

The Special Rapporteur is of the view that States' obligations under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights are to be extended extraterritorially based on the lack of territorial or jurisdictional limitations of the Covenant and the influence the State party may have on other countries. Furthermore, the Special Rapporteur recommends, in his report to the Human Rights Council that the international community reaffirm that all persons whose enjoyment of human rights has been affected by unilateral coercive measures are entitled to effective remedy, including appropriate and effective financial compensation. He deems it necessary to extend the paradigm from remediation to prevention of the adverse effects of unilateral sanctions and calls on States to condemn unilateral coercive measures involving the extraterritorial application of domestic measures as unlawful under international law.

Recent resolutions by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council

On the basis of the two reports by the Special Rapporteur (A/71/187 and A/HRC/33/48), the General Assembly adopted its resolution 71/193 and the Human Rights Council adopted its resolution 34/13. In the latter, the Human Rights Council stressed that unilateral coercive measures and legislation are contrary to international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms and principles governing peaceful relations among States and also expressed its grave concern at the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on human rights, development, international relations, trade, investment and cooperation, recognizing the implications that economic sanctions have on human rights of the targeted population, disproportionally affecting the poor and the most vulnerable classes. The Human Rights Council also recognized that long-term unilateral coercive measures may result in social problems and raise humanitarian concerns in the States targeted and was deeply disturbed by the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the right to life, the rights to health and medical care, the right to freedom from hunger and the right to an adequate standard of living, food, education, work and housing.

The General Assembly and the Human Rights Council both called upon all States to stop adopting, maintaining or implementing unilateral coercive measures not in accordance with international law, international humanitarian law, the Charter of the United Nations and the norms, strongly objecting to the extraterritorial nature of those measures which, in addition, threaten the sovereignty of States, and in this context calls upon all Member States neither to recognize these measures nor to apply them, and to take effective administrative or legislative measures, as appropriate, to counteract the extraterritorial application or effects of unilateral coercive measures. Both bodies reaffirmed that essential goods, such as food and medicines, should not be used as tools for political coercion and that under no circumstances should people be deprived of their own means of subsistence and development.

The concerns expressed by the General Assembly and the Human Rights Council regarding the negative impact of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights are particularly relevant to the situation in Cuba. For a very long time the country has suffered from a lack of access to food at competitive prices and medicines owing to the unilateral coercive measures imposed by the United States.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

Cuba is not a signatory to the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees or the 1967 Protocol thereto. Nevertheless, thousands of refugees have found protection in Cuba over the years and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has supported the Government with protection matters for almost three decades.

Cuba has maintained its de facto policy of non-refoulement for all refugees recognized under the mandate of UNHCR. In 2016, almost 100 persons requested refugee status under the mandate of UNHCR in Cuba, compared with an average of 25 persons per year prior to 2015. This confirms recent trends, with an increase in the number of individuals making long journeys to seek protection in Cuba, above the average of previous years.

Asylum applicants who arrive in Cuba are allowed to remain temporarily in the country while UNHCR conducts refugee status determination and, upon recognition of their status under the Office's mandate, identifies durable solutions for them, mainly through resettlement. In 2016, approximately 290 refugees were in need of a durable solution.

Recognized refugees in Cuba are granted access to the Government's free health-care and education systems, with treatment similar to that enjoyed by nationals. Some refugees have also benefited from the country's university scholarship programme.

Cuba does not grant work permits and has not developed a local integration policy for refugees. However, in recent years, a limited number of refugees were granted permanent resident permits on the basis of the current national legislation. Those persons were given a legal status that grants them rights and opportunities similar to those of Cuban nationals.

Such actions reflect Cuba's commitment to upholding international and regional protection standards, in line with its commitment to the Brazil Declaration and 10-year Plan of Action, which it signed in 2014 along with 27 other countries and three territories in Latin America and the Caribbean.

If the embargo is abolished, leading to further normalization of bilateral relations, more favourable conditions may be created for persons of concern to UNHCR in Cuba. Further opportunities for the local integration of refugees could be explored and improved international cooperation could lead to Cuba's accession to the international refugee and statelessness instruments, as well as to the adoption of stronger protection measures for persons of concern to UNHCR.

South Centre

[Original: English]
[29 May 2017]

On 26 October 2016, the 193 States Members of the United Nations gathered for the twenty-fifth consecutive annual vote of the General Assembly on a resolution entitled "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed against Cuba." For the first time since it was introduced, the resolution was adopted with a near unanimous vote of 191 in favour, none against, and 2 abstentions (United States of America and Israel).[23] There were, for the first time, no votes against the resolution. The results of the vote reaffirmed long-standing international disapproval of the blockade and the restrictions it imposes that continue to be enforced despite the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba in 2015.

The resolution reiterated and reflected previous resolutions, reports and declarations adopted by the United Nations and other intergovernmental forums and bodies rejecting the use of unilateral coercive measures such as trade sanctions in the form of embargoes and the interruption of financial and investment flows between sender and target countries, such as the United States embargo on Cuba. Such measures have had negative impacts on the full enjoyment of human rights of people of the countries concerned, in particular the most vulnerable groups including women, the elderly and children. Such measures have also adversely affected the ability of the countries under sanctions to contribute to international development cooperation, such as in the case of Cuba.

In the light of the concerns expressed above, the General Assembly, in paragraph 4 of its resolution 71/5, requested the Secretary-General, in consultation with the appropriate organs and agencies of the United Nations system, to prepare a report on the implementation of the resolution in the light of the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and international law and to submit it to the General Assembly at its seventy-second session. Over the years, the annual report of the Secretary-General's has become an important vehicle for highlighting the adverse impact of the United States embargo on Cuba and calling for its end. The report provides a clear picture of the impact of the unilateral coercive measures of the United States embargo in relation to Cuba, and the consequences for the Cuban people and around the world.

The present input by the South Centre is prepared as a contribution to the report of the Secretary-General, with respect to the imposition of unilateral economic, finance and trade measures by one State against another.

The South Centre is the intergovernmental organization of developing countries established in 1995 pursuant to the Agreement to Establish the South Centre deposited with the United Nations following the recommendations of the report entitled "The Challenge to the South". The report was prepared by the South Commission and its outcomes were considered by the General Assembly in its resolution 46/155. The South Centre holds observer status at the General Assembly and currently has 54 developing country member States, including Cuba. The Centre supports developing countries in promoting and defending their common interests in the international arena, and undertakes policy research on the various international policy areas that are relevant to the promotion of the development needs of developing countries and their efforts towards the strengthening of the United Nations system and of multilateralism.

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[23] In 2015, the resolution was adopted with 192 in favour and 2 against (United States of America and Israel) without abstentions. See United Nations, "Despite resumption of relations between United States, Cuba, General Assembly adopts, almost unanimously, resolution calling for blockade to be lifted", GA/11713, 27 October 2015. Available from www.un.org/press/en/2015/ga11713.doc.htm.

The General Assembly, in its resolution 71/5, reaffirmed the commitment of States to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and called upon all States to refrain from promulgating and applying laws and measures such as the embargo imposed against Cuba, contrary to international law and the principles of sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in their internal affairs and freedom of international trade and navigation. For over 20 years now, the United States has applied the Helms-Burton Act (1996), the application of which has extraterritorial effects adversely impacting Cuba's trade and international cooperation not only with the United States but also with third countries. This is a continuation of the embargo imposed by the United States against Cuban for over five decades,[24] which has been counterproductive and caused enormous social, economic and trade losses to the people of Cuba.

The change in United States policy towards Cuba announced by the Obama administration in December 2014 led to a shift from a sanctions-based policy towards one of engagement and normalization of relations, with the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in July 2015. Cooperation in sectors such as health were initiated so as to facilitate cooperation on combating such diseases as cancer and the Zika virus, in a memorandum of understanding signed in June 2016 as one example. Unfortunately, the embargo still remains fully in place and most trade and financial transactions between the United States, or persons subject to United States jurisdiction, and Cuba continue to be prohibited as reaffirmed by the Unites States Treasury in January 2017.[25]

Despite the efforts undertaken by the past United States administration during 2015 and 2016 to effect policy changes vis-à-vis United States relations with Cuba, the embargo continues to subsist because lifting the embargo would require Congressional action to repeal legislation relating to the embargo that has been in place since 1961. The shift towards policy engagement with Cuba has been largely endorsed by United States citizens and businesses as several opinion polls have shown.[26] This has also been reflected in the work of the Congress of the United States.

As the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations pointed out in her statement of explanation of vote, resolution 71/5 was "a perfect example of why the United States policy of isolation toward Cuba was not working — or worse, how it was actually undermining the very goals it set out to achieve".[27] Several statements made by Member States regarding the vote also repudiated the United States embargo against Cuba, which is contrary to the principles of the Charter and international law, including by violating human rights and the right to development of Cuban people and third parties.[28]

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[24] President John F. Kennedy proclaimed an embargo on trade between the United States and Cuba in February 1962 (Presidential Proclamation 3447), available from www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-76/pdf/STATUTE-76-Pg1446.pdf.

[25] United States, Department of Treasury, "Frequently asked questions related to Cuba", updated 6 January 2017. Available from www.treasury.gov/resource-center/sanctions/Programs/Documents/cuba_faqs_new.pdf.

[26] Pew Research Center, "Growing public support for U.S. ties with Cuba — and an end to the trade embargo", 21 July 2015. Available from www.people-press.org/2015/07/21/growing-public-support-for-u-s-ties-with-cuba-and-an-end-to-the-trade-embargo; Dalia Sussman, "Most Americans support ending Cuba embargo, Times poll finds", *New York Times*, 21 March 2016. Available from www.nytimes.com/interactive/projects/cp/international/obama-in-cuba/most-americans-support-ending-cuba-embargo-nyt-poll-finds.

[27] Somini Sengupta and Rick Gladstone, "U.S. abstains in U.N. vote condemning Cuba embargo", *New York Times*, 26 October 2016. Available from www.nytimes.com/2016/10/27/world/americas/united-nations-cuba-embargo.html.

In recent years, several legislative initiatives and provisions in appropriations bills have been presented by United States lawmakers regarding the embargo on Cuba. Many of these envisaged further easing or lifting of the embargo. However, none of them have been enacted. Some of the bills aimed at easing the embargo include: H.R. 351 (travel), H.R. 442/S. 472 (some economic sanctions), H.R. 498 (telecommunications), H.R. 525 (agricultural exports and investment), H.R. 572 (agricultural and medical exports and travel), H.R. 574 (overall embargo) and S. 275 (private financing for United States agricultural exports).[29] Substantial debates were also held in the House Committees recently. On 14 September 2016 for instance, the House Committee on Agriculture held a hearing on "American Agricultural Trade with Cuba".[30] Despite the proximity which makes the United States a natural trading partner, the embargo still poses difficulties in agricultural trade between the two countries.

To date in the 115th Congress, several bills have been introduced that would lift or ease restrictions on United States exports to Cuba, including those outlined below:[31]

- H.R. 442 (Emmer)/S. 472 (Moran) would repeal or amend various provisions of law restricting trade with Cuba, including certain restrictions in the Cuban Democracy Act, the Cuban Liberty and Democracy Solidarity Act and the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000. The bills would repeal restrictions on private financing for Cuba in the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act but would continue to prohibit United States Government support for foreign assistance or financial assistance, loans, loan guarantees, extension of credit or other financing for export to Cuba, albeit with presidential waiver authority for national security or humanitarian reasons. The federal Government would be prohibited from expending any funds to promote trade with or develop markets in Cuba, although certain federal commodity promotion programmes would be allowed.
- H.R. 525 (Crawford) would permit United States Government assistance for United States agricultural exports to Cuba as long as the recipient of the assistance is not controlled by the Cuban Government; authorize the private financing by United States entities of sales of agricultural commodities; and authorize investment for the development of an agricultural business in Cuba as long as the business is not controlled by the Cuban Government and does not traffic in property of United States nationals confiscated by the Cuban Government.
- S. 275 (Heitkamp) would amend the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act to allow for the private financing by United States entities of agricultural commodities for Cuba.
- H.R. 572 (Serrano), among its various provisions, has the goal of facilitating the export of United States agricultural and medical exports to Cuba by

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[28] United Nations, "As United States, Israel abstain from vote for first time, General Assembly adopts annual resolution calling for lifting of United Nations embargo on Cuba", GA/11846, 26 October 2016. Available from www.un.org/press/en/2016/ga11846.doc.htm.

[29] See Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. Policy in the 115th Congress", Congressional Research Service, 21 April 2017, appendix A. Available from https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/R44822.pdf.

[30] See https://agriculture.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=3512.

[31] Ibid. See also Rennack and Sullivan, "Cuba sanctions".

permanently redefining the term payment of cash in advance to mean that payment is received before the transfer of title and release and control of the commodity to the purchaser; authorizing direct transfers between Cuban and United States financial institutions for products exported under the terms of the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act; establishing an export-promotion program for United States agricultural exports to Cuba; and repealing the on-site verification requirement for medical exports to Cuba under the Cuban Democracy Act.

- H.R. 574 (Serrano) would lift the overall economic embargo on Cuba, including restrictions on exports to Cuba in the Cuban Democracy Act and the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act.

The Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations described the current situation in a recent statement by saying that:

> Some progress has been made in bilateral relations, mainly in diplomatic affairs, dialogue and cooperation on various issues of common interest. However, these steps, together with the executive measures adopted by the previous United States Government, although they are in the right direction, are still insufficient. But the reality is that the economic, commercial, and financial blockade against Cuba remains in force, including its extraterritorial scope, and continues to cause enormous damage and deprivation to our people and our economy.

The change in the United States administration in January 2017 and press statements delivered so far under the administration of President Donald Trump in this regard have raised concerns on the future of United States-Cuba relations. The reversal of some of the policy changes taken by the United States Government since the re-establishment of diplomatic relations in July 2016 under the Obama Administration would negatively affect not only the people of Cuba but would also go against the interests of United States citizens and the United States business community.

The impacts of the embargo continue to be felt by the Cuban people. For example, an Amnesty International paper released in 2009, entitled "The United States embargo against Cuba — its impact on economic and social rights" highlighted the negative impacts of the embargo particularly on vulnerable groups, and called for a comprehensive assessment to be undertaken on an annual basis by the United States administration.

Recent decisions of the United States Office for Foreign Assets Control (OFAC) highlight the extent to which the embargo remains in place against Cuba, with third countries, their companies and banks being subjected to the payment of large fines because they have maintained trade and finance relations with Cuba. From 2009 to 2016, a total of 49 fines have been imposed by OFAC, owing to violations of the embargo. Some of the most recent examples as reported in 2016 by the Government of Cuba include:

- Penalization of the French company CGG Services in February 2016 for providing services and equipment of United States origin for oil and gas exploration in Cuba's territorial waters and for seismic research by a Cuban entity in Cuba's special economic development zone;
- Imposition of penalties on two European banks for maintaining legitimate banking relations with Cuba and other countries, as follows: a penalty of $1.710 billion on Commerzbank of Germany, and a penalty of $1.116 billion on Crédit Agricole of France. As a result of the penalty, the German bank

terminated its transactions with Cuban banks and the Embassy of Cuba in Berlin;

- Blocking of a transfer of 22,000 euros from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to the Cuban embassy in Kazakhstan by BNY Mellon. Those funds continue to be withheld despite negotiations by the United States Department of the Treasury with that bank.
- Rejection of a transfer from a Cuban nickel trading company by the Swiss bank Banque Cantonale de Genève.
- Since 17 December 2014, the United States Department of the Treasury has imposed eight penalties against entities from the United States and third countries for violation of the regulations against Cuba. Such penalties amount to over $2 billion.

In his statement to the General Assembly regarding the vote on resolution 71/5, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba, Bruno Rodríguez, stated that

> "The human damage resulting from the blockade is incalculable. There is no Cuban family or industry in the country that has not suffered its effects on health, education, food, services, prices of goods, wages and pensions. The imposition of discriminatory and onerous conditions, together with the deterrent effects of the blockade, restricts food purchases and the acquisitions on the United States market of drugs, reagents, spare parts for medical equipment and instruments and others.

The Minister offered several specific examples, including:

- The United States company Medtronic was unable to establish contracts with Cuban companies for the sale of deep brain stimulators, used in the treatment of Cuban patients with Parkinson's disease and other neurological disorders.
- The multinational company Sigma Aldrich could not provide means of protection and chemical and biotechnological products requested by the Cuban company FarmaCuba, for the manufacture of medicines in the country.
- In May 2016, the United States Nuclear Regulatory Commission notified the United States branch of the German company Eckert and Ziegler that it would deny the licence application to provide the Dutch company Philips with the calibration source for medical equipment acquired by the Cuban Oncology Institute in 2013, affecting a vital service for cancer patients.
- On 26 September 2016, Italian medical equipment supplier Emildue notified Cuban company MediCuba that the United States company Boston Scientific Corporation refused to sell it a Cosman brand radio-frequency generator for the diagnosis of cancer.

The Minister concluded his examples by stating that "the blockade also affects the interests of American citizens themselves, who could benefit from various services in Cuba, including health care".

Despite the hardship of the embargo, which impedes significant development, Cuba has achieved an exemplar model of health systems and research, which could serve as a model for many countries and an element of international cooperation. The World Health Organization recently certified that Cuba had officially become the first country in the world to eliminate mother-to-child transmission of

HIV/AIDS and syphilis. Cuba's success is a step in the right direction to reduce the global threat of HIV/AIDS, as called for in the Sustainable Development Goals.[32]

The embargo not only affects the Cuban people and Cuban commercial and financial transactions, but also the South-South cooperation initiatives that Cuba has been undertaking for decades. Cuba's emergency medical assistance response to the African countries affected by the Ebola crises in West Africa was recognized worldwide and is a great example of solidarity with the international community. Cuban assistance in addressing the health crisis would have been more extensive were it not for the embargo. The permanent lifting of the embargo will allow Cuba to cooperate more with other developing countries on health, education, environment and agriculture, among other issues. Both developing and developed countries could greatly benefit from Cuba's outstanding experience in biotechnology, for example.

United Nations entities would also benefit from cooperating with Cuban experts on their projects more frequently, considering that in most cases, difficulties resulting from the embargo make it more complicated for the United Nations to recruit Cuban experts, as has been explained by several United Nations entities in previous reports, owing to several complications ranging from issues with payment to travel permits.

The representative of the European Union, in a statement of explanation of vote on resolution 71/5, while welcoming the progress made also recognized that the fundamental restrictive measures are still in place, and stated:

> Under the new circumstances, they are even more of an anachronism. Beyond the damaging impact of the embargo on ordinary Cubans, the effects and side effects of extraterritorial legislation and of unilateral administrative and judicial measures are also negatively affecting the economic interests of all. This requires even more urgent action, given the greater opening of the Cuban economy.[33]

The States members of the European Union have strongly condemned the embargo. The delegation stated that United States legislation, such as the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996, extended the effects of the United States embargo to third-party countries. In the framework of the common commercial policy, the European Union had firmly and continuously opposed such extraterritorial measures.

> Contrary to our expectations, the situation for European Union financial operators in and with Cuba that are targeted by extraterritorial sanctions, has not improved, and has even worsened in some ways. This constitutes undue interference and problems for European Union citizens, businesses and non-governmental organizations living, working or operating in Cuba. We expect an early solution to those problems, as normalization with Cuba should apply to all interested parties.

A new chapter in European Union-Cuba relations began in December 2016 with the signature of the Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement in Brussels.

Developing countries have continually stressed that the international law principles relating to the sovereign equality of States, non-intervention and non-interference in internal affairs and the freedom of international trade and navigation, are essential principles that ensure the development and maintenance of a rules-based multilateral regime that is conducive to peace and the development of developing countries. Developing countries have also been consistently united in calling for the elimination of the application of unilateral coercive measures, including the application of economic and trade measures by one State against another that affects the ability of the latter State to enjoy the benefits of unhampered international commerce and navigation, and also interferes in relations with third countries, and has a negative impact on their trade, investments and cooperation activities. For example, in 2014, the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Cuba presented his country's estimate that the accumulated economic damages of the blockade against Cuba imposed by the United States have amounted to $1.1 trillion. Also, in 2016, the Minister for Foreign Commerce recognized that the economic and financial embargo limited the flow of international trade and investments with Cuba, affecting foreign investment which is now about a third of the annual flow required to meet its goals.

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[32] "Cuba eliminates mother-to-child transmission of HIV and Aids", United Nations WebTV, 27 March 2017. Available from http://webtv.un.org/news-features/watch/cuba-eliminates-mother-to-child-transmission-of-hiv-and-aids-/5374392704001#full-text.

[33] See A/71/PV.32.

At the seventeenth summit of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, held in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in September 2016, the leaders of more than 120 countries, several observer States and international organizations deplored the embargo on Cuba. In the summit outcome document, paragraphs 479 to 483, the Heads of State or Government of the Non-Aligned Movement, while welcoming the historic decision by the Presidents of Cuba and the United States to re-establish diplomatic relations, once again reiterated the call to the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba. They also urged the President of the United States to use his broad executive powers to substantially modify the embargo which, in addition to being unilateral and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations and to international law, and to the principle of good neighbourliness, is causing huge material losses and economic damage to the people of Cuba. They once again urged strict compliance with General Assembly resolutions 47/19, 48/16, 49/9, 50/10, 51/17, 52/10, 53/4, 54/21, 55/20, 56/9, 57/11, 58/7, 59/11, 60/12, 61/11, 62/3, 63/7, 64/6, 65/6, 66/6, 67/4, 68/8, 69/5, and 70/5. They expressed deep concern over the widening of the extraterritorial nature of the embargo against Cuba and rejected the reinforcement of the financial measures adopted by the Government of the United States, aimed at tightening the embargo. The Heads of State or Government also demanded the cessation of the parole programme for Cuban medical professionals carried out by the Government of the United States, which affects Cuban cooperation programmes and deprives Cuba, and many other countries in need, of vital human resources.

The Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China, the largest group of developing countries, at their fortieth annual ministerial meeting held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York on 23 September 2016 (see A/71/422, annex), reaffirmed once more their strong objection to such measures. In paragraph 151 of the declaration adopted on that occasion, the Ministers of the Group of 77 and China reaffirmed their firm rejection of the imposition of laws and regulations with extraterritorial impact and all other forms of coercive economic measures, including unilateral sanctions, against developing countries and reiterated the urgent need to eliminate them immediately. They emphasized that such actions not only undermine the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations and international law but also severely threaten the freedom of trade and investment.

The Ministers of the Group of 77 and China called upon the international community to adopt urgent and effective measures to eliminate the use of unilateral coercive economic measures against developing countries. The Permanent Representative of Thailand representative, speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, in the context of the meeting of the General Assembly to vote on resolution 71/5, said that from April 2015 to April 2016, the impact of the embargo had amounted to $4 billion in losses for the Cuban people and had far-reaching humanitarian consequences for the country. If the blockade continued, Cuba's development potential would be unfairly undermined and its sustainable development ambitions threatened. Cuba's emergency assistance to the countries affected by Ebola in Africa was a testament to its long-standing commitment to humanitarianism. With the lifting of the embargo, Cuba would also be empowered to continue its aid operations worldwide.[34]

In paragraph 152 of the Ministerial Declaration adopted by the Foreign Ministers of the Group of 77 and China, the Ministers expressed their strongest rejection of the implementation of unilateral coercive measures and reiterated their solidarity with Cuba. As they welcomed the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States and, in that context, the visit of President Barack Obama to Cuba, they reaffirmed their call upon the Government of the United States to put an end to the economic, commercial and financial blockade imposed on Cuba for more than five decades. The Ministers, while recognizing that the actions taken by the executive branch of the Government of the United States to modify some aspects of the implementation of the blockade were positive, but that they still had a limited scope, encouraged the President of the United States to continue taking all actions within his executive powers to substantially modify the application of the blockade against Cuba and the Congress of the United States to initiate, as soon as possible, a discussion on removing it.

Several outcomes of United Nations conferences and other forums adopted between June 2015 and May 2017 have also rejected the use of unilateral coercive measures, including the United States embargo on Cuba. For example, in September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by consensus in General Assembly resolution 70/1, entitled "Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development". In paragraph 30 thereof, it is stressed that "States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries".

Furthermore, a more comprehensive analysis of the impact of all the unilateral coercive measures currently being applied on the enjoyment and achievement of human rights would be an important initiative. This is particularly important in relation to assessing the impact of such measures on the human rights of people living in affected countries, particularly on women, the elderly and children, who are too often the main victims of such measures, as is the case with the prohibition regarding access to medicines and technology for the production of medicines in Cuba and in the Islamic Republic of Iran, two countries affected by an embargo by the United States. The United Nations would be best placed to make such an analysis and assessment on a more regular and substantial basis. In this regard, the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the negative impacts of unilateral coercive measures on the enjoyment of human rights by the Human Rights Council, in accordance with its resolution 27/21 is an important achievement. In the resolution, the Council also mandated the conduct of a biannual panel discussion on the issue of unilateral coercive measures and human rights.

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[34] Virachai Plasai, Permanent Representative of Thailand to the United Nations, Chair of the Group of 77, "Necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba", statement to the plenary on the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, New York, 26 October 2016. Available from www.g77.org/statement/getstatement.php?id=161026.

The re-establishment of diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba under the leadership of President Barack Obama and President Raul Castro marked a positive historical turning point. This positive step should be followed up actively with a permanent lifting of the embargo.

The embargo on Cuba has had an adverse impact on the economic growth and development of Cuba and its population. It also affects the full potential of Cuba to be an actor in international trade and development. There is great positive potential arising from improving Cuban ties with the United States and the rest of the world, and this potential can be unlocked by permanently ending the embargo against Cuba as soon as possible, consistent with the calls made by the General Assembly and all developing countries.

United Nations Children's Fund

[Original: English]
[15 June 2017]

The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) has been working with Cuba since 1962. It formally established a fully-fledged country office in 2000. The current five-year country programme is aligned with the UNICEF strategic plan 2014-2017, national priorities of Cuba and the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014-2018.

UNICEF supports the Government's efforts to maintain past achievements and improve service quality in three areas for children: health and nutrition; education; and protection and participation. In this context, the embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba continues to affect the living conditions, education and opportunities for development of Cuban children, adolescents and their families. Although a number of sanctions were lifted over the past year, many restrictions are still in place and new regulations will take some time to implement. One example is the latest measure allowing the use of the United States dollar for financial transactions in Cuba, which has not come into effect.

The restrictions under the embargo continue to increase the cost of supplies and of basic social services such as health care and education, as many basic implements have to be acquired in distant markets, often through intermediaries. This then increases the cost of social services for children and women, prevents access to the latest-generation inputs and technology and creates stock shortages of supplies for programmes aimed at children.

In the health sector, the effects of the embargo continue and accumulate over time. Medicine, reagents, spare parts for equipment used for diagnoses and treatment and medical and surgical instruments become more costly and the embargo creates delays in their reaching those who need them. For example, the technical instruments required to calibrate medical equipment as part of the quality control process are in limited supply since the companies that supply them such as Craftman, Fluke Medical and BC Group are established in the United States. The country has to turn to other markets in Europe and China, or go through intermediaries, considerably increasing the costs. Another example that affects children directly is the specialized software programme used to diagnose phenylketonuria and other congenital diseases, which is registered in the United States and is not available for use in Cuba. Therefore, children cannot be diagnosed at an early stage and properly treated with dietary programmes to avoid intellectual disabilities.

The embargo has a negative impact on the quality of education and participation programmes since it increases the costs of educational supplies, such as specialized literature, equipment and materials for physics, chemistry and biology laboratories, as well as of computer parts and sports equipment. Children with disabilities are disproportionally affected owing to the cost of their specialized needs and/or materials they require, such as Braille machines or other equipment for the production of educational materials for blind children. Restrictions in the access to markets also affects technical professional education programmes, since it hampers the purchase of the raw materials, equipment and tools used for practical training that provides an option for adolescent boys and girls to train for future employment. The options to develop knowledge and practice as regards information and communication technologies is limited for children and adolescents, given the barriers to access computer tools and the narrow Internet connection bandwidth.

Impact of the embargo on the operations of the United Nations Children's Fund in Cuba

The commercial restrictions mentioned above also apply to the operations of UNICEF in Cuba, mainly regarding the provision of supplies for children, causing an increase in costs and longer purchasing processes (up to 120 days). Furthermore, it was estimated that access to United States markets would also reduce freight-related and logistical expenses. The operational costs of the Cuba country office increase every year, given that global suppliers cannot be accredited in the country, therefore products are not available in local markets, all of which affects technical assistance that relies strongly on providing supplies. In 2016, 66 purchase orders in the amount of $1.8 million were bought from external suppliers.

It should be noted that despite authorization by the United States to access/utilize dollars in international transactions, restrictions still remain on bank transfers to and from Cuba. For the replenishment of the local bank account in dollars, UNICEF requires the use of an intermediary bank in Canadian dollars, since no direct transfers are possible from the United States. In 2016, the additional financial cost on average was 3.5 per cent of the total amount transferred, resulting in a net loss of $66,500.

Local staff and international staff who use the bank that provides services to the United Nations office are also affected because, given the restriction on United States banks operating in Cuba, they are unable to access their savings since their debit and credit cards cannot be used in the country. Other personal financial transactions, such as the opening of bank accounts and converting their salary from dollars into local currency, affect international staff.

United Nations Conference on Trade and Development

[Original: English]
[30 May 2017]

In the Nairobi Maafikiano (TD/519/Add.2 and Corr.1), adopted at the fourteenth session of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) held in July 2016, states that

> States are strongly urged to refrain from promulgating and applying any unilateral economic, financial or trade measures not in accordance with international law and the Charter of the United Nations that impede the full achievement of economic and social development, particularly in developing countries, and that affect commercial interests. These actions hinder market access, investments and freedom of transit and the well-being of the populations of affected countries. Meaningful trade liberalization will also require addressing non-tariff measures including, inter alia, unilateral measures, where they may act as unnecessary trade barriers.

In December 2014, President Barack Obama initiated historic measures to normalize the diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba and to ease the embargo. Although diplomatic, social and commercial exchanges between the two countries are growing, most parts of the embargo continue to be applied and significantly affect the lives of Cuban people.

Economic and trade trends in Cuba

The Cuban Government reported that the cumulative economic damage caused by the embargo up to mid-2016 had surpassed $126 billion, an increase of $5 billion from the previous reporting period. The external trade balance damage caused by the embargo from mid-2015 to mid-2016 was estimated at $4.1 billion, which was slightly greater than the previous period. A large part of this damage was the result of forgone revenues from exports of Cuban goods and services to the United States or third countries (See A/71/91).

In 2016, the Cuban economy was affected by hardships such as austerity measures, lower export earnings and reduced support from the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.[35] In addition, Hurricane Matthew ravaged the eastern provinces of Cuba in October 2016 and caused huge damage.[36] It is estimated that Cuba's economic growth over the year was a mere 0.5 per cent, in contrast with the robust growth of 4.4 per cent in the previous year.[37] It is projected that the economy will remain under strain in 2017.[38]

In international trade, Cuba is a goods-importing and services-exporting country. As observed in the trade data from 2012 to 2016 provided in tables 1 to 4, UNCTAD estimates that the country had a deficit of $9.6 billion in trade in goods and a surplus of $9.2 billion in trade in services in 2016, leaving a deficit of $402 million in total trade balance in 2016. The deficit was reduced by $1 billion since 2015. The main export items were ores and metal. The main destination for Cuban goods was the European Union. The main import items were manufactured goods and fuel. The main source of import was the Latin America and Caribbean region.

Major sources of Cuba's foreign currency earnings included the export of professional services, tourism, nickel, biotechnology and pharmaceutical products.[39] These are supplemented by remittances from the United States, which are estimated at $3 billion for 2015.[40] According to the Ministry of Tourism of Cuba, the country received a record 4 million foreign visitors in 2016, an increase of 13 per cent from the previous year. UNCTAD estimates that the revenues from travel exports were $2.6 billion and $3.0 billion in 2015 and 2016, respectively. While the largest source of international tourism in Cuba was Canada, the biggest increase came from the United States.[41] The increase in tourist arrivals was attributed to the resumption of regular commercial flights from the United States to Cuban cities, and to an increase in stops by cruise ships from Canada, the Russian Federation, Spain and the United

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[35] Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", Congressional Research Service, 18 January 2017, p. 14.

[36] Caribbean News Now!, "UN development agency working with Cuban government in areas hard-hit by Hurricane Matthew", November 14, 2016. The Hurricane affected more than 600,000 people and damaged 38,000 homes.

[37] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 14.

[38] Economist Intelligence Unit, Country report: Cuba. Available from http://country.eiu.com/cuba (accessed 1 May 2017).

[39] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 13.

[40] United States, Department of State, Bureau of Western Hemisphere Affairs, "U.S. relations with Cuba", fact sheet, 7 September 2016. Available from www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2886.htm.

[41] Cuba Journal, "Cuba attracts record visitors in 2016", 31 December 2016. Available from http://cubajournal.co/cuba-attracts-record-visitors-in-2016.

States.[42] However, the country still has a low level of tourism relative to other Caribbean countries. The ratio of international tourists to the local population for Cuba was 0.26, whereas the corresponding numbers for the Dominican Republic, Costa Rica and Jamaica were 0.49, 0.53 and 0.76, respectively.[43]

The Cuban Government has taken measures to promote the non-State sector which, at the end of 2015,included more than half a million people. This figure is expected to rise over time as activities included in the non-State sector gradually expand.[44] Remittances are, and are likely to remain, the major source of financing for activities in the non-State sector.[45] The United States is the largest source of remittances for Cuba, estimated at between $1.5 billion and $3 billion in 2015.[46] This figure places remittances as the largest source of cash in the Cuban economy.[47]

Developments in the United States [[H2]]

The major shift in bilateral relations introduced by the administration of President Barack Obama in December 2014 eased the embargo in several phases. The relaxation measures included (a) the restoration of diplomatic relations and (b) the easing of the travel and commerce restrictions. In order to implement the second measure, the Departments of the Treasury and of Commerce eased the embargo regulations five times, most recently in October 2016, in such areas as travel, remittances, trade, telecommunications and financial services (see A/71/91). However, the easing has been limited and the embargo continues to prohibit most potential transactions between the two countries.[48]

Goods that can be exported to Cuba from the United States without government authorization are confined to telecommunications products and services, construction materials and equipment and tools for use by the agriculture sector and the non-State sector (see A/71/91). The export of other United States products and services to Cuba are prohibited, unless authorized by the government through the issuance of specific licences for a limited time. The resulting loss of commercial opportunities for the United States is substantial.[49] Some United States airlines and cruise ships started to operate between the two countries last year. However, the embargo maintains that travel of United States citizens to Cuba must fall under one of the permissible categories of travel, which do not include tourism.[50] Also prohibited are most imports from Cuba and goods originating in Cuba. For example, merchandise purchased or otherwise acquired in Cuba or of Cuban origin acquired in a third country.[51] The financial restrictions and extraterritorial aspects of the embargo remain in place and are fully applied.[52]

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[42] Ibid.

[43] Richard E. Feinberg and Richard S. Newfarmer, "Tourism in Cuba: riding the wave toward sustainable prosperity" (The Brookings Institution, 2016), p. 11.

[44] See World Trade Organization (WTO), document WT/L/850; document G/C/W/734, para. 2.14.

[45] Economist Intelligence Unit, Country report: Cuba.

[46] Mark P. Sullivan, "Cuba: U.S. Restrictions on travel and remittances", Congressional Research Service, 7 February 2017, p. 15.

[47] Jack Evans, "Remittances support budding Cuban economy", *Miami Herald*, 11 July 2016. Available from http://www.miamiherald.com/news/nation-world/world/americas/cuba/article88891862.html.

[48] See https://ustr.gov/countries-regions/americas/cuba.

[49] United States, International Trade Commission, "Overview of Cuban imports of goods and services and effects of U.S. restrictions" (Washington, D.C., 2016) p. 19. It estimates that loses are about $1.8 billion annually for the goods sector.

[50] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 42.

[51] United States, Department of State, "U.S. relations with Cuba".

[52] See WTO, document G/C/W/734, paras. 1.2 and 1.3.

In October 2016, President Obama issued a presidential policy directive on the normalization of relations with Cuba and outlined the roles and responsibilities for various departments and agencies of the Government of the United States in moving the normalization process forward.[53] The directive can be viewed as an attempt to maintain the momentum towards normalizing relations in the new administration and to protect the changes that have been made to date in policy towards Cuba.[54] At the seventy-first session of the General Assembly, the United States abstained, for the first time, on the vote concerning the Assembly resolution on the United States embargo against Cuba.[55] In addition, in January 2017, President Obama ended the special treatment for Cuban migrants entering the United States.[56]

Donald Trump was sworn in as the forty-fifth president of the United States on 20 January 2017. The direction of United States policy towards Cuba under the new administration is uncertain.[57] Given that much of the economic embargo on Cuba remains in place, the new administration might choose to keep the changes that have already been made but refrain from approving any additional easing of restrictions, pending economic or political changes in Cuba.[58]

Conclusions

While the easing of the embargo initiated by the Obama administration substantially increased transactions between the two countries, the essential elements of the embargo remain in force and greatly limit the potential for expanded commercial relationships. Consequently, the embargo continues to have a severe impact on Cuba by inhibiting the normal development of its economy. It is hoped that the policy initiated by the Obama administration will be supported and advanced by the current administration and the Congress of the United States, which would be consistent with the resolutions adopted by the General Assembly over the past 25 years.

Table 1

Cuba: trade balance

(Millions of United States dollars)

	2012	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
Goods	-8 720	-9 399	-8 112	-10 724	-9 563
Services	10 354	10 720	10 589	9 349	9 161
Balance	**1 634**	**1 321**	**2 477**	**-1 375**	**-402**

Source: Calculations are based on the figures in tables 2, 3 and 4 on trade in goods and services

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[53] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 34. The policy directive addressed six elements: (a) government-to-government interaction; (b) engagement and connectivity; (c) expanded commerce; (d) economic reform; (e) respect for universal human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic values; and (f) Cuba's integration into international and regional systems.

[54] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 34.

[55] However, the Permanent Representative of the United States to the United Nations, stated that abstaining on the resolution did not mean that the United States agreed with all the policies and practices of the Cuban Government. See Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 20.

[56] United States, Office of the Press Secretary, "Statement by the President on Cuban immigration policy", 12 January 2017. Available from https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2017/01/12/statement-president-cuban-immigration-policy. This treatment was the so-called "wet foot, dry foot" policy, in which thousands of undocumented Cuban migrants have entered the United States in recent years.

[57] Sullivan, "Cuba: issues and actions in the 114th Congress", p. 74.

[58] Ibid., p.36.

Table 2

Cuba: merchandise exports

(Millions of United States dollars)

Partner	*Commodity group*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
European Union (EU 28)	All food items	522	566	433	399	345
	Ores and metal	1 491	1 528	1 494	1 190	1 030
	Fuels	10	6	3	5	4
	Manufactured goods	56	71	64	51	44
	Total	**2 078**	**2 172**	**1 995**	**1 644**	**1 423**
Latin America and the Caribbean	All food items	34	30	43	28	24
	Ores and metal	24	18	14	15	13
	Fuels	69	95	80	65	56
	Manufactured goods	585	531	522	431	373
	Total	**712**	**677**	**659**	**539**	**467**
United States of America	All food items	0	0	0	0	0
	Ores and metal	0	0	0	0	0
	Fuels	0	0	0	0	0
	Manufactured goods	0	0	0	0	0
	Total	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**	**0**
Rest of the world	All food items	753	566	537	485	420
	Ores and metal	2 036	1 764	1 612	1 418	1 228
	Fuels	36	16	29	21	18
	Manufactured goods	46	60	63	45	39
	Total	**2 871**	**2 406**	**2 241**	**1 970**	**1 705**
World	All food items	1 309	1 162	1 013	913	790
	Ores and metal	3 550	3 310	3 120	2 623	2 271
	Fuels	115	118	112	91	79
	Manufactured goods	687	662	649	526	455
	Total	**5 661**	**5 252**	**4 894**	**4 152**	**3 594**

Source: UNCTAD secretariat based on the United Nations Comtrade and International Monetary Fund — Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS) databases.

Note: All food items (SITC 0 + 1 + 22 + 4); ores and metals (SITC 27 + 28 + 68); fuels (SITC 3); manufactured goods (SITC 5 to 8 less 667 and 68).

All figures are estimates.

Table 3

Cuba: merchandise imports

(Millions of United States dollars)

Partner	*Commodity group*	*2012*	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*	*2016*
European Union (EU 28)	All food items	564	580	588	615	544
	Ores and metal	45	36	29	39	34
	Fuels	80	66	49	69	61
	Manufactured goods	2 471	2 648	2 221	2 595	2 295
	Total	**3 160**	**3 330**	**2 888**	**3 318**	**2 935**
Latin America and the Caribbean	All food items	732	775	758	804	711
	Ores and metal	40	34	23	34	30
	Fuels	5 177	5 202	4 870	5 403	4 779
	Manufactured goods	1 196	916	1 047	1 122	992
	Total	**7 145**	**6 927**	**6 699**	**7 362**	**6 511**
United States of America	All food items	565	296	235	385	341
	Ores and metal	0	0	0	0	0
	Fuels	0	0	0	0	0
	Manufactured goods	12	14	12	13	11
	Total	**577**	**310**	**248**	**398**	**352**
Rest of the world	All food items	226	389	358	346	306
	Ores and metal	77	57	46	63	56
	Fuels	57	51	46	54	48
	Manufactured goods	3 139	3 587	2 723	3 335	2 950
	Total	**3 498**	**4 085**	**3 173**	**3 799**	**3 360**
World	All food items	2 087	2 040	1 940	2 150	1 902
	Ores and metal	162	127	98	136	120
	Fuels	5 314	5 319	4 965	5 526	4 888
	Manufactured goods	6 818	7 165	6 003	7 065	6 249
	Total	**14 381**	**14 651**	**13 006**	**14 876**	**13 157**

Source: UNCTAD secretariat based on the United Nations Comtrade and International Monetary Fund — Direction of Trade Statistics (DOTS) databases.

Note: All food items (SITC 0 + 1 + 22 + 4); ores and metals (SITC 27 + 28 + 68); fuels (SITC 3); manufactured goods (SITC 5 to 8 less 667 and 68).

All figures are estimates.

Table 4

Cuba: service exports and imports

(Millions of United States dollars)

		2012	*2013*	*2014*	*2015*[a]	*2016*[a]
Export	Total services	12 760	13 027	12 663	11 369	11 242
	of which travel	2 326	2 344	2 367	2 601	2 990
Imports	Total services	2 406	2 306	2 074	2 021	2 081

Source: UNCTADstat.

[a] Estimates (Figures for 2012-2014 are national reported data).

United Nations Development Programme

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

Cuba continues to maintain a high human development index ranking and the country is committed to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

The Cuban development model continues to change. The document on social and economic policy guidelines was approved during the Sixth Communist Party Congress in April 2011. The Cuban Parliament also agreed to support the guidelines and approved the document during its regular session in August 2011. The guidelines were updated at the Seventh Communist Party Congress, held in April 2016, and the document continues to provide guidance for ongoing reform. The guidelines are innovative within the national context and represent a challenge for the country. The main objective of the guidelines is to stimulate foreign investment and accelerate economic growth and competiveness, recognizing that local governments have an important role in the forthcoming decentralization framework. In late 2013, Cuba initiated a process of monetary unification, which represents a key challenge for the country. The complex process is ongoing, and requires rigorous preparations to address the possible impacts it may have on the population. In this context, universal social services and social development remain a priority for the Government. The traditional social protection network is thus being adjusted to ensure sustainability and greater focus on the most vulnerable groups, such as the elderly.

Guideline No. 85 of the social and economic policy guidelines calls for the promotion of multilateral collaboration to support the 2030 national development plan, with direct reference to the United Nations system. In that regard, the United Nations system supports national authorities in addressing emerging issues and challenges.

The draft conceptualization of the Cuban economic and social model and the 2030 national plan for economic and social development have been submitted to a broad consultation process across Cuban society. The two strategic documents are expected to be approved in 2017. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) supports the efforts of national authorities to address emerging development issues and challenges.

The partnership between UNDP and Cuban authorities is based on a long-standing relationship. UNDP has supported major local and national development strategies and policies for over 40 years. At present, cooperation is carried out within the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014-2018 and the UNDP country programme document (2014-2018). The country programme document was approved by the Executive Board and is fully aligned with the UNDP strategic plan (2014-2017). UNDP has been cooperating with national authorities in the following areas: promoting food security; using renewable energy; supporting national policy and productive sectors to reduce levels of imports; supporting local governments and their development strategies, particularly those related to value chains; introducing and applying measures for adaptation to climate change, especially in food production; contributing to sustainable development by promoting the sustainable use of natural resources through knowledge and technology transfer to productive sector policies, and a more effective disaster risk reduction strategy; and supporting the national response to HIV/AIDS and combating discrimination based on sexual identity. Gender and youth are cross-cutting themes.

The United Nations Development Programme supports priority areas of cooperation that contributed to the implementation of the social and economic policy guidelines, in areas that are at times innovative within the national context and have a high strategic relevance in view of the changes to the Cuban development model. Fostering sustainable human development will continue to be at the heart of the cooperation programme, which promotes South-South cooperation, innovation and technology and knowledge transfer.

Re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States

In December 2014 the Presidents of Cuba and the United States of America, Raul Castro and Barack Obama, announced the decision to initiate conversations, focusing on steps to be taken to officially re-establish diplomatic relations. After several rounds of negotiations, the embassies of Cuba and the United States were opened in Washington, D.C., and Havana, respectively, in the summer of 2015. A bilateral commission was established to help move towards the full normalization of diplomatic ties and has concluded its third round of talks. The commission is responsible for addressing all pending issues and holds formal discussions in areas of common interest. Cuba maintains that no full normalization is possible until the embargo is lifted.

In this new context, certain measures have been approved by the United States authorities, including: Cuba is no longer part of the list of countries designated as State sponsors of terrorism by the United States; regular flights from the United States to Cuba have been authorized and established; Cuba was excluded from the list of countries with inadequate port security, facilitating naval traffic between the United States and Cuba; some cruise lines have received licences to travel to Cuba; and the restoration of the direct postal system between the two countries was approved. United States travellers to Cuba are restricted to 12 categories, under a general licence, and no longer require the approval of the Government of the United States; Cuban citizens that are residing in the United States on a temporary basis may earn a salary without having to go through the immigration process; and there is no limit on remittances sent by Cuban-Americans to families in Cuba.

The export of such items as building materials, agricultural equipment and tools from the United States were opened up to the Cuban private sector; credits for exports or re-exports to Cuba of approved products will be authorized (except for agricultural products, which by law are still subject to cash in advance); re-export from a third country of items from the United States is allowed (only for scientific, archaeological, cultural, ecological, educational, sports, research and historic preservation purposes and for professional meetings). In addition, the United States permitted the export of telecommunications equipment to Cuba for the establishment of telecommunications infrastructure connecting both countries, as well as within Cuba; and Cuba's State-owned telephone company, Empresa de

Telecomunicaciones de Cuba, signed a deal with New Jersey-based IDT Telecom, T-Mobile USA and Verizon to restore direct telephone connections between the United States and Cuba. MasterCard bank cards issued by non-United States banks, as well as those issued by Stonegate Bank and the Banco Popular de Puerto Rico, can be used at automated teller machines (ATMs) in Cuba as from the end of June 2016.

At the beginning of 2017, the United States ended its "wet foot, dry foot" policy. With this step, Cuban migrants are treated like migrants from other countries. The Department of Homeland Security also terminated the Cuban Medical Professional Parole Program.

Specific effects of the United States embargo

Despite the above-mentioned measures, the embargo remains in place and its negative impact continues to be very similar to that of previous years, particularly on commerce and on financial activities. The embargo affects the external economic relations of Cuba, and its impact can be observed in all spheres of the country's social and economic activities; the embargo maintains the restrictions on the use of the dollar and on imports from Cuba. It affects opportunities for national and local development and creates economic hardship for the population. The embargo has an impact on the population's most vulnerable groups in particular and on human development in general.

According to official estimates, the cumulative direct and indirect losses to the Cuban economy due to the embargo from the early 1960s until April 2016 amount to $125.8 billion at current prices.

The embargo has limited Cuba's access to development credits granted by international financial institutions such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank. This has narrowed the possibility of obtaining resources to provide financial support for Cuba's national and/or local development plans.

In the context of updating the Cuban economic model, the embargo also limits the participation of foreign investors, particularly United States companies, in prioritized economic projects, including the special development zone in Mariel. In that regard, the embargo impedes investment flows and limits access to regional and global value chains.

Travel by Cuban experts and researchers to the United States in the framework of cooperation agreements has been limited by the process of obtaining visas.

The embargo has continued to negatively affect day-to-day work in external cooperation initiatives, creating many difficulties for the implementation of programmes and projects owing to trade restrictions or prohibitions on purchasing inputs from United States companies and subsidiaries established in the United States or in other countries. It also reduces the number of possible suppliers and limits the competitive process. To date there is no evidence that the measures adopted have changed the international context for commercial and financial relations with Cuba.

At a financial level, the embargo continues to prevent the country office from making transfers in United States dollars. For this reason and although budgets of all projects are recorded in dollars, transfers abroad are made in a currency other than dollars (namely euros, Canadian dollars, British pounds, Japanese yen and Swiss francs). However, even when payments are made in one of these currencies, transaction delays have increased as a result of additional information requested by banks in order to comply with the Office of Foreign Assets Control of the United States Treasury (OFAC) all along the banking chain system (issuing, intermediate and beneficiary). This measure has affected the ability of UNDP to honour payments to suppliers within the agreed timeframes.

In addition, and in spite of the recent measures on port security, the embargo places practical restrictions on shipping lines whose vessels dock in Cuban harbours. This significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of transportation and delaying the loading of goods. Costs associated with intermediaries and long-distance transportation have had a negative impact on the ability to access key inputs and on the final cost of imported project goods and equipment. Likewise, products for development projects have to be purchased and imported from more distant places, at much higher costs.

Effects on projects

The embargo has had a direct impact on all UNDP development projects and emergency activities, both because it increases the transaction costs of obtaining project inputs and because it increases the cost of transporting the imported goods. Finding alternative shipping companies requires additional time and effort. As a result, projects have been affected by significant delays in the purchase and distribution of project inputs, which has had a negative impact on the timely implementation of project activities and results.

The situation has been particularly worrisome in the case of projects related to food security and local development, given the lengthy process to access and import agricultural inputs such as irrigation systems, machinery and agricultural tools. In general, procurement processes take longer, delaying project activities and their results. Therefore, financial proposals and new projects must consider, in their designs, an extended period for procurement processes and they also must allocate additional financial resources to cover incremental costs, that could otherwise be allocated for development activities. Those additional costs are covered by the funds provided by international development partners, which are channelled through UNDP.

Many of the assets required by the office projects involve United States technologies or have United States manufacturing components. The Torricelli Act of 1992 and the Helms-Burton Act of 1996 are still in force, both of which explicitly prohibit sales to Cuba by United States companies and subsidiaries in third countries, including sanctions against those who violate the prohibition.

The situation also affects the acquisitions of computer technology. After the re-establishment of diplomatic relations between Cuba and the United States in 2015, an information and communications technology provider, Planson International, stated its interest in participating in bidding processes through competitive procedures and when they finally were awarded a purchase order in early 2017, they faced delays in obtaining export licenses to Cuba. The purchase order was the first one placed with this provider, which was an important advance in the enrichment of the information and communications technology provider portfolio of the UNDP Cuba country office. The contract was signed on 7 March 2017 and, on 28 March, the vendor announced that the delivery would be delayed by licensing issues in relation to the United States Department of Commerce (Bureau of Industry and Security). On 30 March, the vendor sent a communication informing UNDP that it could not confirm that it would be able to obtain the licences on time. In view of the risk of breach of contract with the consequent loss of funds, the purchase order was cancelled.

The projects financed by the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (Global Fund), of which UNDP is the principal recipient, provide medicines, reagents and laboratory equipment that benefit 21,758 people, of all ages, living with HIV/AIDS. They are purchased from third countries and from secondary suppliers at prices significantly higher than those of comparable products sold on the international market. Even when long-term corporate UNDP agreements with international suppliers apply to the project in Cuba, the embargo hinders purchases of products that are manufactured, or have a component manufactured, in the United States. In such cases, the providers have to obtain a licence from the Office of Foreign Assets Control to deliver services or products to projects in Cuba, a bureaucratic process that takes time and effort. For example, in 2015, the Global Fund approved the purchase of Raltegravir 400 mg, which is produced by Merck in the United States. UNDP went through the process to obtain the licence to buy the drug from a generic producer (Hetero Labs in India); however, the licence was not granted to buy the drug from the generic producer, only directly from Merck. As a result, Cuba could not acquire the drug as it cannot purchase products manufactured in the United States.

The Global Fund approved the purchase of GeneXpert IV equipment for a project in Cuba on 21 May 2013. This is high-technology equipment promoted by the World Health Organization for the rapid diagnosis of tuberculosis and multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis. The equipment is necessary for people living with HIV/AIDS or people at risk of contracting tuberculosis. Cepheid is the only supplier of the equipment authorized by the Global Fund. However, the supplier could not sell the equipment until the licence was approved. Notification of the licence was obtained in April 2014, almost a year later, which delayed the benefit to patients in need of this important equipment. In 2016, the purchase of 3 additional GeneXpert IV pieces of equipment was approved by the Global Fund. Since the licence awarded in 2014 had expired, the process had to be initiated again. The licence has yet to be granted.

Effects of the embargo on country operations of the United Nations Development Programme

The embargo also affects the day-to-day work of the UNDP office in Cuba, placing it at a disadvantage compared with other country offices. There are limits to the benefits that can be gained from corporate long-term agreements to effectively implement and monitor development and emergency activities. For example, although there is a long-term agreement signed with Toyota Gibraltar, to date, the company cannot supply spare parts originating in the United States. This situation increases transaction costs by at least 15 per cent owing to the participation of intermediaries and higher costs for alternative information and communications technology equipment and services as well as access to software licences. Access to Internet services is limited as a result of the embargo, thus restraining the effective use of corporate platforms and increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities. With regard to information and communications technologies, the embargo prevents the UNDP office from directly accessing technical support to products and services from the United States such as Hewlett Packard, CISCO, Dell and others. The same situation applies to software licences. For example, Hewlett Packard has a long-term agreement contract with UNDP, but it cannot be used by UNDP-Cuba, due to the embargo regulations. The same situation applies to authorized distributors.

The UNDP Cuba office is also affected by not being able to use corporate accounts with United States banks or use the United States dollar as a currency of payment. The office has to take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations; for example, it has to use third-country banks, which results in higher costs to the office and its projects and a heavier administrative burden. The related increment in costs have been covered by UNDP and project funds from donors, therefore using resources that could otherwise have been used for development activities.

Another way in which UNDP is affected by the embargo is that national staff required to travel to UNDP headquarters in New York have to request their visas far in advance.

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

[Original: English]
[19 May 2017]

While the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is a specialized technical agency within the United Nations system and not a funding agency, the embargo by the United States of America against Cuba continues to have an impact on the work of UNESCO with the Cuban people.

The announcement of the negotiations to re-establish diplomatic relations between the United States and Cuba has had a positive impact on the demand for and the implementation of UNESCO action in different fields, in particular those related to cultural heritage, tourism and intercultural dialogue, owing to a renewed interest in the country.

Although some provisions have been made to lessen restrictions and the related damage over the past two years, the legal framework of the embargo has remained largely unchanged.

Cuban national companies and foreign companies established in Cuba cannot purchase products, components or technologies from the United States, even though the United States often represents the closest, most competitive and diversified market. Alternative markets that are adequate are more distant, resulting in higher import costs and delays in delivery time. Moreover, goods, services or technologies produced by the United States, covered by United States patents, or containing any component produced and/or patented by the United States, are not available to Cuba.

This situation is complicated by additional restrictions placed on shipping companies whose vessels dock in Cuban ports, including a 180-day waiting period in which ships cannot dock in the United States following their docking in Cuba. This restriction significantly reduces the number of shipping companies that include Cuba in their routes, limiting the availability of the international transportation of necessary goods.

These restrictions prevent or significantly reduce options for the purchasing of educational resources, up-to-date scientific materials, historic preservation materials, high technology equipment (including fibre-optic and software licences as well as other goods and supplies from the United States or elsewhere if under United States patents). This presents a direct limitation on the possibilities for programme activities and educational opportunities focusing on the use of information and communications technology, which is particularly relevant given the areas of action of UNESCO.

Thus, UNESCO and other organizations working in Cuba are often forced to buy goods or to contract services at less competitive prices and from less diversified markets. As a result, it is exceedingly difficult for the organization to ensure the best value for money for contracts and services for programme activities.

These circumstances greatly affect the day-to-day work of the UNESCO office in Cuba, placing it at a disadvantage compared with other country offices.

Financial resources that could have been used to more effectively achieve the expected development results are required to cover additional costs incurred as a result of the conditions caused by the embargo. The additional costs must be covered by the organization and its regular and/or extrabudgetary funding and can affect the overall efficiency of the office.

Similarly, access to Internet services is limited because of the embargo, thus restraining the effective use of corporate platforms and increasing the amount of time required to perform online processes and activities.

In cases where direct financial costs are not incurred, offices must often take additional administrative measures to carry out programme-related financial operations, resulting in higher administrative costs, the use of banks in third countries and a heavier administrative burden.

In addition, there have been cases where financial transactions with Cuban institutions or service providers have experienced delays as a result of being identified as "prohibited transactions", specifically through the Specially Designated National list of the Office of Foreign Assets Control, one of its other sanctions lists, or targeted countries, thereby generating administrative delays.

The embargo has also affected the financial transactions and banking and insurance services of international and national UNESCO staff. Local staff have extreme difficulties in using United States-based facilities, such as internal bank account transfers or transfers between accounts. In addition, international staff with local bank and/or credit card accounts regularly encounter difficulties in making payments outside of Cuba. This becomes particularly relevant when facilitating working missions that include international travel and accommodations, as those accounts cannot be used to reserve or pay for travel services, such as flights and hotels. In the case of health insurance for UNESCO and other United Nations staff, staff are directly affected, as many health insurance companies cannot have direct commercial transactions with local health-care providers as a result of embargo restrictions, directly hindering the delivery of health-care services to staff.

United Nations Environment Programme

[Original: English]
[20 April 2017]

The embargo imposed by the United States of America on Cuba not only affects that country but also affects the Caribbean subregion and the United States itself.

Conservation efforts in the Caribbean islands hotspot are fragmented and incomplete and they lack a necessary common strategy, since Cuba is excluded from several of the most important projects in the subregion, owing to the fact that the projects are being implemented with United States funds. This not only prevents Cuba from benefiting from the projects, but it affects the Caribbean subregion, as the subregion cannot be approached as a whole.

The embargo also significantly affects the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems shared between Cuba and the United States. It eliminates the possibility for the implementation of common strategies for the integrated management of the environment and the natural resources that surround these two countries and important integrated progress cannot be made in the absence of agreements and dialogue between the two Governments to focus on their shared environments.

Much of the work of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) is also carried out through South-South cooperation, which involves knowledge transfer, capacity-building and technical support from and to Cuba and other countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, by way of training events, capacity-building activities, and workshops. Therefore, the continuing embargo translates into missed opportunities for environmental cooperation in the region.

When working in Cuba, there is often a need to search for alternatives in the use of technology, for example, the global information system software used for remotely sensed and spatial data gathering and processing, which is needed for certain activities and projects. Given the existing trade restrictions, common suppliers are unable to deliver products and services in Cuba, therefore the alternatives in terms of other capable software are limited.

The economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba also affects the operations of the United Nations. Simple things such as Cuba making its financial contribution to UNEP are affected, as banks often block transfers and transactions from funds coming from the country. Cuba's financial contribution is important to support the implementation of the programme of work.

A concrete example of the embargo's effects, is a global environment facility project in Cuba, which is ready to begin a number of initiatives, but faces challenges with the transfer of funds to Cuba. The transfer must be done through the United Nations Development Programme, which, in turn, entails additional expenses. Funds that would otherwise be invested in the project are used to pay those expenses. In addition, the United Nations Development Programme has stated that owing to those difficulties, no procurement will be made for the project. This creates problems for the general implementation of the project.

Other examples of the impact of the embargo are outlined below:

(a) United States companies are not allowed to sell equipment, technology or products, among others, to Cuban companies, so Cuba is forced to buy them in other markets, increasing cargo travel times and subsequently increasing carbon emissions associated with transport;

(b) Cuba continues to increase energy efficiency, under its energy revolution programme, as well as to promote recycling and other green technologies. The aim is to decrease oil consumption and carbon dioxide emissions and to achieve general resource efficiency. However, United States companies, or their subsidiaries in other countries, cannot sell technologies to Cuba that could support such endeavours. The same is true of products of non-United States companies that contain parts or components provided by United States companies or subsidiaries that could assist in advancing such developments;

(c) Cuba will face difficulties in meeting the obligations derived from the Minamata Convention on Mercury as a consequence of limited access to mercury-free technology and the difficulty in phasing out products containing mercury, such as dental amalgams; leading to uncontrolled mercury releases that have regional and global effects;

(d) The participation of Cuban experts in environmental and sustainable development conferences and training activities is often constrained by travel restrictions and thousands of dollars are spent on more expensive and often longer routes for travel; in addition to this, their daily subsistence allowance cannot be provided through bank transfers because of the financial restrictions;

(e) The embargo on Cuba also restricts access to information from leading scientific and technical journals and publications, as well as Internet access to specialized companies and institutions in the United States. This limits access by Cuban academics, engineers and students to cutting-edge developments in energy and environmental sciences, which could increase their capacities or their implementation of sound environmental technologies. Connectivity restrictions also limit Cuba's ability to implement and comply with certain environmental treaties that require the constant use of the Internet;

(f) Cuba also has limited bandwidth as a result of the embargo, which affects the participation of Cubans in Internet-based conference sites and in webinar platforms to attend virtual meetings and training sessions, which are increasingly being implemented to decrease travel costs, among others;

(g) The United States and Cuba are located in a region where disasters, particularly hurricanes, are seriously affecting ecosystems and populations. Both countries are working to attain higher levels of prevention of and preparation for disasters. In this sense, cooperation would benefit both countries, as well as other countries of the wider Caribbean area;

Especially at this point in time, when Member States around the world have adopted important global agreements, such as the Paris Agreement adopted under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, it is imperative to facilitate cooperation among countries and remove barriers. The total elimination of the obstacles that limit the normal exchange between the two countries would contribute to advancement in the sustainable management of shared ecosystems, cooperation between scientific and academic communities and in the increased contribution of both countries in the fight against climate change, in ecosystem management, in facing natural disasters and the prevention of accidents. It would also benefit other countries where the United States and Cuba have cooperative programmes.

United Nations Human Settlements Programme

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) has been active in Cuba since 2001. It opened a country office in Havana in 2005 in order to support the Government of Cuba in implementing its urban development agenda, in coherence with the mandate of the agency.

Since 2005 UN-Habitat has supported the country through technical assistance projects aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework and the country programmes of the United Nations Development Programme and UN-Habitat. The implementation of the New Urban Agenda at the national and subnational levels, involves technical assistance in urban planning, resilience and early recovery in urban areas following natural disasters. UN-Habitat has also advised Cuba on reforms in the housing sector.

The implementation of those development-oriented projects has been severely limited as a result of the political, economic and commercial blockade on Cuba, which restricts access to international markets for supplies, equipment, technologies and the development of infrastructure. Urban development and housing sectors are fundamental in improving the quality of life of the Cuban people.

With the new phase of relations between Cuba and the United States of America, various measures have been adopted and implemented by both countries to create bridges in economic, investment, trade and cultural arenas. This supports the need to end the economic and commercial blockade, which becomes more evident as new opportunities arise.

The implementation of General Assembly resolution 71/5 on the necessity of ending the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed by the United States of America against Cuba, will enable Cuba to make a greater contribution to the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals and the New Urban Agenda, notably with respect to Sustainable Development Goal 11 to make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization

[Original: English]
[28 April 2017]

Currently, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) is supporting the efforts of the Cuban Government to promote foreign direct investment and create strategic alliances conducive to strengthening the country's industrial capabilities and competitiveness in priority industrial sectors through the implementation of a country programme.

The formulation of a country programme was requested by the Cuban Government in November 2014 and was subsequently developed in close cooperation with the relevant national counterparts, in line with the economic and industrial transformation policies established by the Cuban Government and with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework 2014-2018.

The country programme focuses on three main objectives: (a) improving the business environment and sustainability; (b) improving the industrial competiveness; and (c) attracting foreign investment. The country programme includes various projects in strategic sectors for Cuba's economic and social development, such as industrial policy, the use of renewable energies, fresh food industry and the integrated management of hydraulic resources, among others.

An overall budget of €50 million has been tentatively identified, to be mobilized for the implementation of the programme. But owing to the restrictions in fund mobilization and partnership constraints caused by the economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba, UNIDO has not been able to make the expected and needed advances within the country programme.

Nonetheless, UNIDO launched three projects within the country programme on the occasion of the International Fair for Cuban Industry ("CubaIndustria") held in June 2016 in Havana.

Even with the negative impact of the embargo, UNIDO furthered promising business opportunities between Cuba and Slovakia in the framework of the project on strengthening Slovakia-Cuba alliances, between September 2016 and February 2017.

UNIDO is convinced that without the restrictions caused by the embargo, the interregional effort to promote foreign direct investment, one of the key elements of the Programme for Country Partnership approach of UNIDO, could have brought higher benefits.

United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction

[Original: English]
[17 May 2017]

The Government of Cuba is actively engaged in the implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 at the global, national and regional levels. In particular, it contributed to the work of the open-ended intergovernmental expert working group on indicators and terminology relating to disaster risk reduction, which developed global indicators for the seven global targets of the Sendai Framework and to their subsequent endorsement by the General Assembly in February 2017 (resolution 71/276), as well as to the development of the "Regional Action Plan for the Implementation of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 in the Americas" adopted by the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction in the Americas, hosted by Canada in March 2017, as well as the sharing of good practices in the region. At the national level, the advancement of Cuba in managing disaster risk and implementing the Sendai Framework, including through community-based early warning, education and effective evacuation plans and safe shelters, was demonstrated by the fact that there was no loss of life when category 4 Hurricane Matthew landed in Cuba in October 2016.

Disaster risk reduction is at the core of sustainable development. Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals will depend on countries' capacity to manage disaster risk, as confirmed by the shared indicators across the Sustainable Development Goals and the Sendai Framework. While acknowledging Cuba's progress in managing disaster risk, the implementation of the recently adopted Regional Action Plan and of the Sendai Framework, in particular the Sendai Framework target related to the adoption of national and local disaster risk reduction strategies by 2020 and in coherence with the Sustainable Development Goals, will require, among others, performing risk assessments, the determination of baselines and the further development of disaster loss databases and of monitoring systems in close collaboration with other countries in the region and globally. Cuba's ability to access information, knowledge, scientific advances, assets and resources from donors and international financial institutions will condition its capacity to adopt such measures.

United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime

[Original: English]
[1 June 2017]

The United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) notes that the Caribbean region continues to be confronted with serious challenges related to the illicit production and trafficking of cocaine originating in Latin America. UNODC is further strengthening its presence in the Caribbean to support member States in their efforts to counter these challenges and expects to strengthen its cooperation with Cuba in the context of initiatives for the region, including new initiatives to enhance border controls.

Cuba is covered by the UNODC Regional Office for Central America and the Caribbean in Panama, which began its activities in September 2009. In April 2014, UNODC launched the regional programme 2014-2016 (recently extended until 2018) in support of the Crime and Security Strategy of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM). Although Cuba is not a member of CARICOM, it benefits from the regional programme, particularly through synergies with the Caribbean Forum of African, Caribbean and Pacific States, of which Cuba is a member. The Programme consists of five subprogrammes, which not only reflect the range of thematic areas covered by the UNODC mandate, but also directly target the strategic goals of the CARICOM crime and security strategy.

In the context of the regional programme, UNODC re-established a presence in the Caribbean, in Barbados, in August 2015. The UNODC Caribbean office is expected to support Cuba as part of a stronger presence of UNODC in the region, in close coordination with important regional and national counterparts.

Cuba has effectively cooperated with UNODC in the areas of its mandates and this contribution has been always positively assessed by both parties. Cuba is a State party to the United Nations Convention against Corruption and has participated in an active and efficient manner in its review process (Cuba has been the reviewer of Nicaragua, Guyana and Saint Lucia and has used its right to request the publication of its final country report on the homepage of UNODC).

Following Cuba's expression of interest in joining the Global Container Control Programme of UNODC and the World Customs Organization, an initial technical mission took place from 30 May to 3 June 2016 to assess the existing capabilities and discuss the details of Cuba becoming a member of the Programme. As a result of the mission, it was agreed that the container control programme at sea would be implemented in the port of Mariel, while the container control programme for airports would be implemented at the José Martí International Airport. UNODC and the Cuban authorities are in the process of discussing the content of the memorandum of understanding for the implementation of the Programme, which is expected to be signed before the end of 2017.

In the implementation of its initial activities in Cuba, UNODC has been facing some communication-related challenges, especially with regard to the quality and cost of Internet services. Nevertheless, UNODC has continued to collaborate with the Cuban authorities, including in the development of the national strategy against trafficking in persons, which allowed UNODC to suggest elements for inclusion in the strategy. Cuban officials have also participated in the meeting of the regional law enforcement network on wildlife crime organized by UNODC in the Caribbean. The network met in May 2017 with the participation of Cuban officials.

For UNODC it is essential to continue promoting resource mobilization to include Cuba in the implementation of UNODC activities in the Caribbean. In this context, the regional office for Central America and the Caribbean is making every effort to include Cuba as a beneficiary/partner member State in new initiatives to be presented to donors for funding. An end to the economic, commercial and financial embargo would presumably facilitate the future operational engagement of UNODC in the country, in close partnership with the Cuban authorities.

United Nations Population Fund

[Original: English]
[21 June 2017]

Despite the restoration of diplomatic relations between the United States of America and Cuba, the main measures of the commercial, economic and financial embargo imposed by the United States against Cuba continue to be in effect. The embargo continues to affect the economic, social and cultural development of the Cuban people, particularly, the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) continues to face difficulties in implementing its country programme, as regards the acquisition and purchase of commodities, equipment, medicines and laboratory materials produced in the United

States or covered by United States patents. The commodities linked to sexual and reproductive health assistance and related materials have to be purchased in other regions, usually resulting in an increase in costs for transportation and freight charges.

Difficulties in the procurement of necessary inputs on the local market continue to negatively affect the implementation of the UNFPA programme.

The United Nations Population Fund is one of the few organizations that support sexual and reproductive health, population and development, and gender programmes in Cuba. Despite a reduction in regular resources for the country programme, UNFPA has continued efforts to strengthen networks with political, academic and social actors in support of the outcome of the International Conference on Population and Development. UNFPA continues to support Cuba's efforts to maintain the progress in the areas of sexual and reproductive health, sexuality education programming, maternal health and access to family planning methods, which was achieved under the economic embargo, including through domestic resource mobilization.

Universal Postal Union

[Original: English]
[7 July 2017]

The Universal Postal Union (UPU) has always regarded Cuba as a fully-fledged member of the organization, as such, Cuba enjoys the same rights and obligations as any other UPU member country.

Cuba currently serves as a member of both the Council of Administration and the Postal Operations Council of UPU, following the results of the elections that took place on 5 and 6 October 2016, respectively, during the twenty-sixth Universal Postal Congress, held in Istanbul, Turkey.

Moreover, Cuba regularly benefits from postal development assistance provided within the framework of UPU technical cooperation activities. In this context, UPU has not encountered difficulties in implementing the aforementioned assistance or undertaking any other joint activities with Cuba as a result of the embargo imposed by the United States of America against the country.

World Food Programme

[Original: English]
[8 May 2017]

Over the past 50 years, Cuba's comprehensive social protection programmes have largely eradicated hunger and poverty. Cuba was one of the most successful countries in implementing the Millennium Development Goals and is ranked sixty-eight on the human development index of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

During the 1990s, Cuba faced a severe economic crisis which had a lasting effect on food security and nutrition. The 2008 global financial crisis, frequent natural disasters, including the drought spells currently affecting the country, high global food prices, limited access to credit, low productivity and the embargo by the United States of America have further exacerbated the food security situation in the country.

In 2011, the Government of Cuba launched a process to improve the efficiency, reduce costs and increase the sustainability of social protection programmes. Those efforts are guided by the Government's commitment to ensure that no Cuban is left unprotected. Under the process, food security was identified as a national priority, with an emphasis on food-related social protection systems, the decentralization of the decision-making process regarding food resources, the adoption of a new management model for agriculture, reinforcing value chains and reducing food imports.

The World Food Programme (WFP) has been working in Cuba since 1963 to support the Government's efforts to promote food security and nutrition. In 2015, the agency launched its first four-year country programme for Cuba, to support the Government's efforts in that regard.

The World Food Programme works in the five eastern provinces (Granma, Guantánamo, Holguín, Las Tunas and Santiago de Cuba), which have the lowest development rates and are prone to drought, torrential rains and occasional earthquakes. In addition, WFP works in the provinces of Pinar del Río and Matanzas in western Cuba, which are exposed to tropical cyclones that severely affect food security and nutrition. WFP activities are aligned with the United Nations Development Assistance Framework for Cuba 2014-2018, which defines food and nutritional security as one of the four pillars of United Nations cooperation in Cuba. The country programme focuses on capacity-building and augmentation using focused transfers to meet critical food and nutrition needs and to strengthen the overall food-related safety nets in Cuba. The programme supports national and local authorities in shifting to more sustainable and targeted social protection systems. This is achieved through three linked objectives:

(a) Supporting food security and nutrition-related social protection programmes;

(b) Strengthening links between social protection systems and agricultural value chains;

(c) Strengthening community resilience, preparedness, disaster risk management and climate change adaptation capacities at the local level.

Effects of the United States embargo

The improvement in relations between the United States and Cuba is welcomed, but their full normalization hinges on the lifting of the embargo. Throughout 2016, the United States embargo continued to have a negative impact on the Cuban economy, as well as on the operational conditions of WFP. High costs to import agriculture equipment or inputs are a limiting factor for agricultural productivity in Cuba, affecting the country's ability to produce all its food requirements. As a result, the Government needs to import a significant proportion of food commodities to meet the requirement of its national food-based social safety net programmes. This represents a significant budgetary burden for the country, threatens those most dependent on social safety nets and poses challenges to food security in Cuba.

The ability to procure services and products from United States-based companies or companies that process payments through United States subsidiaries is also affected by the embargo, directly affecting projects and the ongoing running of the office of WFP. The procurement and shipment of food and non-food commodities, including fortified food provided by WFP, are also delayed owing to the above-mentioned logistical challenges. As a result of the embargo, vessels are obliged to make a stopover in a neighbouring country for trans-shipment, causing delays and additional costs that also affect WFP shipment. This was the case during the WFP response to Hurricane Matthew, which landed in Cuba in October 2016.

The ongoing work of WFP in Cuba is also affected by difficulties in purchasing equipment at more competitive prices. This applies to the purchase of information technology equipment, given that companies from the region are unable to supply it to Cuba, as well as the purchase of spare parts for cars and office stationery, increasing regular costs for WFP. Moreover, voice and data communications are extremely expensive, as they have to bypass the United States telecommunications infrastructure.

Banking transactions are also restricted by the limitations that the embargo imposes on financial institutions dealing with Cuba. This can affect the payment of staff entitlements, as well as their personal financial activities. The country office's payments, though processed through UNDP, are also vulnerable to these limitations.

World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization

[Original: English]
[28 June 2017]

President Raul Castro and President Barack Obama started a new chapter in the relations between the United States of America and Cuba when they announced, on 17 December 2014, that formal diplomatic relations would be re-established with the official opening of embassies. Arrangements were made for the first official visit by a United States President to Cuba since 1928, which took place from 20 to 22 March 2016, consolidating the start of a new era of relations, including in the area of health. Indeed, following the visit by President Obama, the first official mission to the United States of senior authorities from the Cuban Ministry of Health and other national health institutions was organized. Furthermore, the first visit by a United States Secretary of Health to Cuba took place in October 2016, in connection with a regional meeting on arboviral diseases, organized by Cuba's Ministry of Public Health and the World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization (WHO/PAHO). Other senior authorities from the National Institutes of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Food and Drug Administration attended scientific events in Cuba in 2016.

It should be noted that despite the promising outlook for the sector and the signing of the framework agreement between Cuba and the United States for collaboration in the health sector, the embargo continues to cause significant problems for the Cuban people in this regard.

Impact on the population, the health sector and individual health

Cuba gives very high priority to health and, despite the adversities imposed by the embargo, Cuba's health indicators are comparable to those in countries with developed economies. Public resources allocated to health exceeded 10 per cent of the gross domestic product, reaffirming the Cuban Government's commitment to health.

In order to record and monitor the effects of the embargo on the health sector, Cuba's Ministry of Public Health meets with all national institutions that document and report on this impact (national hospitals, research institutions), as well as with provincial units and national groups working in various specialized areas. The Ministry has used its legal authority to create a standing committee, comprising the Director of each of these health institutions and facilities, to study the effect of the embargo. The quality of the information is ensured by individual offices and through monitoring meetings, in accordance with the provisions of Legal Decree

290 of the Cabinet of Ministers, of 29 March 2012, and Law 80 on the Reaffirmation of Cuban Dignity and Sovereignty of 24 December 1996.

For the purposes of compliance with those regulations, losses due to the embargo are considered as those that which result from the enforcement of extraterritorial measures, political pressure, or any other kind of pressure by the United States Government and that hinder or impede Cuba in the conduct of commercial operations and economic transactions stemming from collaboration projects and financial investments; impede access to technology or knowledge; or adversely affect production and services or other areas.

It is important to point out that during the most recent period of analysis regarding the impact of the United States embargo on the health sector in Cuba, other effects — in addition to those identified and described in the previous report — are ongoing and show a rising trend.

The Ministry of Public Health has had to allocate more funds to ensure alternative solutions, on top of the financial constraints identified in the implementation of its import plan. Allocations for the period covered by the present report total dozens of millions of United States dollars. They include the additional costs involved in procuring medicines, medical equipment and supplies and technology, including technology that could quickly facilitate the development of eHealth and telemedicine, with widespread international repercussions. The embargo also imposes additional hardships on the development of the health-care system by preventing the sector from making any commitments to international financial institutions, such as the World Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank, and by limiting access to philanthropic donations and funds donated by United States civil society organizations. The embargo has caused problems in terms of the publication of scientific articles in major international journals owing to the impossibility of making payments, as well as a limit on the number of Cuban scientists who can apply for research projects.

Impact on World Health Organization/Pan American Health Organization technical cooperation

The many impacts of the embargo on WHO/PAHO technical cooperation in Cuba are evident in different spheres: financial transaction costs, purchases and procurement, participation in international events, the organization of international meetings in Cuba and Cuba's participation in discussion forums and distance learning, among others.

In 2016, there were persistent problems in repatriating funds from the WHO/PAHO representative's office in Cuba to the organization's headquarters in Washington, D.C., owing to difficulties with the banks through which the transfers are commonly carried out. These transactions must be made when bank account balances exceed the limits set by WHO/PAHO, requiring the use of alternative methods specifically designed for the WHO/PAHO representative's office in Cuba, which result in longer transaction times and higher costs. A possible solution to the problem would involve:(a) identifying an alternative to the bank WHO/PAHO usually uses; and(b) arranging transfers from the bank WHO/PAHO uses in Washington, D.C., to a third-party bank in Canada and from there to Banco Metropolitano, which is the institution where the WHO/PAHO country office conducts its financial transactions, so as to minimize the number of transactions. Among other things, this involves having to make transfers once a very high threshold of resources is exceeded, which generates losses, for example, in terms of interest on blocked funds.

Efforts to make direct transfers from WHO/PAHO headquarters in Washington, D.C., to Banco Metropolitano in 2016 were unsuccessful.

As a consequence, as at April 2017, WHO/PAHO had approximately $570,500 in blocked funds in the WHO/PAHO/ representative office bank account, in dollars. In addition, this account in Cuba does not pay interest, which represents further losses. Moreover, the approximate monthly average of blocked funds in Cuba, from May 2016 to March 2017, was more than $1 million, according to the following breakdown, creating significant financial losses for the organization.

Date	*Surplus cash in account (United States dollars)*
31 March 2017	601 532.79
28 February 2017	700 700.93
31 January 2017	781 914.33
31 December 2016	855 662.61
30 November 2016	958 250.83
31 October 2016	1 016 004.96
30 September 2016	1 091 505.12
31 August 2016	1 125 250.35
31 July 2016	1 227 763.48
30 June 2016	1 345 897.01
31 May 2016	1 468 039.37
Average	**1 015 683.80**

The effect of the embargo on WHO/PAHO technical cooperation in Cuba in terms of purchases and procurements is very difficult to quantify financially. However, a high percentage of the allocated funds are used to purchase supplies and equipment in strategic areas. A rough estimate is that nearly 80 per cent of the WHO/PAHO Cuba budget is allocated to this category, approximately $1.6 million to $1.8 million per year. The resources cover transportation and other costs that are much higher, since the country has to systematically rely on markets in Asia, Europe and Latin America instead of being able to directly turn to the United States market. Regarding the procurement of medicines and technology, the embargo affects all equipment and supplies of United States origin, either by making it impossible to purchase these items or delaying procurement, owing to the wait times involved in obtaining special licenses from the United States Department of the Treasury, which can take several months. A particularly complex case occurred in connection with WHO/PAHO support for health system recovery in the areas affected by Hurricane Matthew. Although more than $280,000 were available the Fund could not be used to purchase emergency supplies from the United States, such as rapid tests for different water- and vector-borne diseases, chlorine tablets and water tanks. These had to be purchased in other countries at a higher cost, thereby reducing the quantities that potentially could have been acquired.

The embargo also affects the opportunities for Cuban scientists and public health professionals to share experiences at workshops, conferences, and seminars at the regional and international levels. For example, the lengthy visa application process to travel to the United States means that flexible airline tickets have to be purchased owing to the uncertainty as to whether or not the travellers will receive their visas on time. Although this situation improved immensely in 2016 as a result of the rapprochement between the United States and Cuba, there are still some problems in this area. For example, there have been problems in obtaining visas for WHO/PAHO consultants in Cuba and some Cuban authorities to participate in WHO/PAHO events in the United States. It is worth mentioning the case of a Cuban commissioner of the High-level Commission on Health Employment and Economic Growth, who could not attend the General Assembly to deliver the Commission's final report.

Furthermore, hotel reservations cannot be confirmed for Cuban participants, since their credit cards are not valid in other countries. Foreign bank accounts for international WHO/PAHO staff who are Cuban nationals are blocked, including accounts in the WHO/PAHO credit union; and international civil servants cannot use credit cards issued by United States banks to pay for hotels in Cuba. For example, in October 2016, at a regional meeting on arboviral diseases that was attended by many Ministers of Health and senior authorities from countries in the region, as well as by international experts from PAHO and WHO, the WHO/PAHO representative's office in Cuba had to pay lodging costs for over 15 participants whose credit cards were not accepted, resulting in the need to advance more than $10,000.

This does not even take into account the higher costs incurred by the local market for organizing these events, owing to the need for Cuba to import many products from Asia, Europe and Latin America that could have been acquired in the United States.

Cuba's participation in distance learning and discussion forums has also been affected by the embargo. This is worrisome in particular because of the high number of WHO/PAHO collaborating centres in the country in areas ranging from genetics to endocrinology, including the regulation of biomedical products. Indeed, serious problems are occurring with technical cooperation in the country as a result of the incorporation of an online platform adopted by WHO/PAHO at the regional level. The platform does not offer services in Cuba and thus prevents the country's health institutions, including the Ministry of Public Health, from hosting virtual conferences and training provided by PAHO headquarters (for example, through the PAHO Virtual Campus on Public Health) or by WHO, nor can they generate their own virtual cooperation meetings.

Other effects of the embargo on WHO/PAHO technical cooperation are:

- Knowledge management, as the principal difficulties related to the embargo have been linked to the country's access to available scientific information using tools such as: CISCO, Webex, Adobe (Digital Adobe Edition, Adobe Shockwave Player, Flash Adobe Player) and Java, among others;
- The development of scientific and technical information is restricted as a result of the impossibility of procuring information resources from publishing houses in the United States and other countries, owing to obstacles to direct transactions with international banks. Procurements have been made, but only with the support of headquarters, since they cannot be made directly.

World Intellectual Property Organization

[Original: English]
[25 April 2017]

As a result of the embargo, the circumstances that have been observed by the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO) in Cuba are an obstacle to the country's advancement in the field of intellectual property, and have a direct impact on its technology, social and economic development are outlined below:

By restricting the access of Cuban citizens to the United States of America, the embargo limits the possibilities of human resources development in the United States. As a result, specialized Cuban professionals may not fully benefit from higher specialization opportunities in the field of intellectual property, especially those available in the United States. These include, notably, aspects of intellectual property asset management, issues regarding intellectual property office management, as well as the opportunity to become acquainted with successful experiences in the implementation of technology transfer offices, technology management, intellectual property valuation and intellectual property collateralization.

Visa restrictions also hinder the possibilities for Cuban intellectual property professionals to participate in regular training programmes, meetings and other events organized by WIPO in the United States.

Restricted telecommunications infrastructure hinder the widespread dissemination of WIPO online distance learning courses in Cuba, despite the efforts and commitment of local authorities to foster a nationwide culture of respect for intellectual property. Videoconference facilities, which allow a most efficient, cost-effective means of communication, especially for educational and training purposes, are also unavailable, since a major portion of the necessary technical equipment and software tools, originating from the United States, may not be acquired.

Poor telecommunication facilities also have a negative impact on and obstruct the access of Cuban nationals to WIPO online databases and other digital services in the field of intellectual property. This situation, in particular the online access to global intellectual property databases such as Patentscope (patent information) and the Global Brand Database, which are only available through the Internet, is detrimental to the advancement of technological research and other innovation programmes carried out by the Government of Cuba in the field of environmental, medical and life sciences, and bio- and nanotechnologies, and limits the possibility of learning about the behaviour of brands in potential export markets.

The embargo affects the availability of information technology equipment and software for the performance of administrative operations regarding filing and granting procedures, in particular patent and trademark searches and examination services. Although the country is administratively equipped to perform such functions owing to a capillary presence of provincial branches of the Cuban Industrial Property Office, the lack of specialized software critically hinders such performance. External procurement formalities to obtain the required equipment and software are extremely burdensome. The situation continues to cumulatively delay the delivery of services that these offices are required to render and prevents the normal growth and expansion of such services. Most importantly, this situation stifles the possibility of taking full advantage of the functionalities available under the WIPO intellectual property automated system, since some of the system's operating tools are not freely accessible for users in Cuba. As such, the possibilities of expansion and customization of the system to the needs of Cuban users (both in the capital and in the provinces) are seriously compromised.

The extraterritorial effects of the embargo extend to the financial arena as well. Payments from Cuba to WIPO under the WIPO-administered treaties (Patent Cooperation Treaty and the Madrid System) may be effected only in euros or Swiss francs, not in United States dollars, in order to avoid the restrictions imposed by the United States Office of Foreign Assets Control. Likewise, payments from WIPO to the Cuban Industrial Property Office must be made in the same currencies. The cost of those indirect transactions for the purpose of avoiding United States banks amounts to considerable financial losses and discourages the use by Cuban nationals of the Patent Cooperation Treaty and Madrid System.

World Meteorological Organization

[Original: English]
[26 May 2017]

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has been providing support to projects in Cuba, including meteorological equipment, instruments and training and also co-sponsoring meteorological conferences.

As a member of WMO, Cuba benefits from WMO global and regional services, receiving publications and other materials of the organization. Cuba takes part in WMO activities such as meetings, workshops and training courses. It regularly receives satellite imagery, data and guidance materials from all WMO members, including the United States of America, via direct broadcast and the WMO global telecommunications system.

The World Meteorological Organization maintains collaborative relations with all Caribbean States, including Cuba, which is a member of Regional Association IV (North America, Central America and the Caribbean), through the WMO regional office for the Americas. Cuba participates in various regional projects covering the Caribbean area, focused on enhancing early warning systems, improving weather, water and climate services and strengthening observation systems. More recently, Cuba provided technical assistance as part of a WMO project to strengthen the Haitian meteorological service.

World Tourism Organization

[Original: English]
[24 May 2017]

The economic, commercial and financial embargo against Cuba by the United States of America is still evident in general activities, including restrictions on United States citizens to travel for Cuba, which has a direct effect on the Cuban tourism sector.

Although the agreements reached between the Governments of Cuba and the United States are a step towards boosting visits to Cuba from the United States, it has to be emphasized that the regulations of the embargo related to tourism remain. In fact, travel to Cuba from the United States continues to be restricted to the 12 categories authorized by law.

In 2016, international tourist arrivals worldwide grew by 3.9 per cent and in the Caribbean subregion grew by 4.8 per cent, to 25.3 million tourist arrivals. The United States, as one of the largest outbound markets worldwide, strongly contributes to this ongoing growth.

In terms of tourism promotion, Cuba cannot access United States advertising companies or other promotion channels, making it more difficult to "sell" their destination, and their national tourism agency, in charge of servicing the United States market, is not allowed to have direct representation on United States soil.

The embargo measures concerning e-commerce, Internet usage and United States credit card transactions as a means of payment for air ticket sales and tourist services, continue to affect tourism operations in Cuba. The effects arise, in particular, as a result of the geographical relocation of the suppliers, all of which imply higher prices and higher transportation and insurance fees, owing to the long distance that needs to be covered by the supplier markets and also the non-mobility of resources to keep large stocks of merchandise. This also implies higher financial costs, because of the need to access more expensive commercial credit, compared to softer State and bank credit, which is difficult to obtain as a consequence of the pressure from the United States Government on third countries and because of the currency exchange rate variations, as the United States dollar cannot be used as purchasing currency.

In 2016, Cuban tourism companies paid an estimated 30 per cent in excess of prices linked to imports of products highly demanded by tourists, which had to be obtained through third countries. For example, certain products such as food, specialized tourism equipment, technology, electrical materials, general hardware, computer equipment and construction materials are produced in the United States, however, owing to the embargo, they have to be bought from third countries.

In all, international and domestic tourism in Cuba, during the period from April 2016 to March 2017, has continued to be directly affected by the economic, commercial and financial embargo imposed on Cuba by the United States Government in important areas related to operations and crucial logistical services for the tourism sector, which amounted to an estimate that could reach $1.7 billion.

World Trade Organization

[Original: English]
[31 May 2017]

The scope and functions of the World Trade Organization (WTO) are defined in the 1994 Marrakesh agreement establishing the World Trade Organization. The preamble of the agreement recognizes that trade and economic endeavour should be conducted with a view to, among others, attaining higher living standards and ensuring full employment, in accordance with the objective of sustainable development and in a manner consistent with members' needs and concerns at different levels of development. That preamble also stresses the desirability of the elimination of discriminatory treatment in international trade relations.

The issue referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5 was mainly raised in the context of the trade policy review of the United States of America. As part of that process, the secretariat of WTO prepared a report containing various references to measures affecting Cuba.[59] In addition, the issue at hand was raised orally during the meeting of the Trade Policy Review Body of WTO held on 19 and 21 December 2016.[60]

The aforementioned secretariat report mentions that, although a certain opening had occurred, the United States economic embargo on Cuba remained in place.[61] During the meeting of the Review Body dedicated to the review of the trade policy of the United States, Cuba stated that the embargo continued to be the main impediment to the country's economic development and referred to various areas where measures by the United States continued to affect Cuba's economic interests.[62] While acknowledging the efforts made by the Government of the United States to modify the application of some aspects of the embargo, Cuba argued that they had had a very limited impact on bilateral economic, commercial and financial ties.[63] In addition, Cuba, not a direct party to the dispute, argued that the United States had yet to fully comply with the recommendations of the WTO Dispute Settlement Body in the dispute brought by the European Union against the United States over section 211 of the Omnibus Appropriations Act of 1998 enacted by the United States. In answering specific questions posed by Cuba, the United States delegation argued, among other aspects, that "the United States' embargo on trade with Cuba is fully compliant with our relevant obligations under our international trade agreements".[64]

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[59] World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/S/350.

[60] World Trade Organization, documents WT/TPR/M/350 and WT/TPR/M/350/Add.1.

[61] World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/S/350, para.11.

[62] World Trade Organization, document WT/TPR/M/350, paras. 4.123-4.131.

Moreover, the matter referred to in General Assembly resolution 71/5 was raised at a meeting of the General Council of WTO in December 2016,[65] in the context of Cuba's request to extend its current waiver relating to paragraph 6 of article XV of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade 1994, granted on 14 February 2012 and until 31 December 2016. This waiver was originally granted to Cuba by a decision of 14 October 1996. Finally, in the context of the fifth annual report[66] on the renewal of this waiver, Cuba drew WTO members' attention to the financial restrictions imposed by the United States on foreign banking institutions in dealing with Cuba.

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[63] Ibid., para. 4.130.

[64] World Trade Organization document WT/TPR/M/350/Add.1, p. 180.

[65] World Trade Organization, document WT/GC/M/165.

[66] World Trade Organization, document WT/L/994.